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SOL. L. LONG

Child Slaves & Other Poems

By Sol. L. Long

L.C.

1909
THE COURIER PRESS
WINFIELD, KANSAS

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Preface

I make no apology for this volume. I am not mendacious enough to offer the conventional apology. The verses are not perfect. Neither is their author, nor is any one who shall read them. They will be criticised, both as to form and substance; but not by the one who has sailed my sea, and criticism by one who has not sailed my sea is hearsay and immaterial.

It is well and commendable to strive toward perfection, but wherein is the sense, rhyme, or reason, in apologizing for not reaching it; when one knows, and the world knows, to a dead moral certainty, that perfection cannot be reached. All apologies for any sort of mental effort are either unconscious, or premeditated, peans of egotism.

Men have attempted to define poetry. It cannot be defined; and this, because it is an attempt to interpret life and life is eternal and being so is indefinable; not to be comprehended, much less reduced to rule. Life can only be guessed at in part and poems, prose or verse, are only the writer's fleeting and imperfect glimpses of that elusive, eternal thing of which all things here are shadows on a screen, mere echoes of things real. Poets are only voyagers who have sailed life's present seas and noted their rocks, reefs, dangerous coasts and safe harbors, and poems are the log-book of the voyage.

Whether or not any poem be of any sort of value to you; whether or not it appeals to you at all, depends upon whether or not you have sailed, are sailing, or about to sail, one of the seven seas of life voyaged by the one by whom the poem was produced. If you have not sailed the sea from whence the chart was drawn it will appear worthless —you will not understand it. If you are sailing such sea, it will be of value before the end of the voyage.

Never was a measure written, from the obituary in the country weekly, to the most sublime epic; from the fan-

tastic things the youth conjures up and writes for the eyes of her who inspired them, to the measure that seems to lift the veil of the Eternal world, but what possessed some of the divine harmony which holds the spheres in place. Imperfect? All to a degree. Deformed? Much. Worthless? None. Nothing was ever penned but that somewhere, someplace, was some one to whom it would appeal—some one who was hungry for that sort of food. The mere searcher after mechanical perfection will overlook this, but the one who has gazed long into the unfathomable depths of the human soul will know it to be true—know it as he does his mother's language.

Save in very few instances the productions herein are just as they were first penned. It is my experience that the working over of verses, after the time when they had to be written has passed, results in mechanical perfection and spiritual deformity.

I have, as near as practicable, followed the order of production in the arrangement of the verses in the book, and this for two reasons: One, to enable the solemn searcher after small things to obtain a text from which to moralize on the development, or degeneracy, of the bard—provided, always, that he, or she, conclude there was a bard —and for a second, stronger and main reason: because I so desire to place them.

Whatever others may say, I know that these are echoes —but echoes only. No chord is herein touched but what the writer has heard, in the surrounding vastness, louder, more triumpthant, more despairing, more tender, more hopeful, more entrancing strains, and not only heard them but saw the hand that swept the harpstrings.

Holding these views, any apology for the verses would be an insult to the reader and a stultification of myself, and I am not conventional enough to do either. If I am to lie of record I shall make it an original and not to the hackneyed and conventional departure from truth.

Dedication

There are those who labor to strike the shackles from the limbs of men; making them free physically.

There are those who labor to remove the fetters from the minds of men; making them free mentally.

There are those who labor to banish trammels from the souls of men; making them free spiritually.

These three classes are God's great, and only, visible trinity.

To one of this trinity, who speaks the language of the "Old Frontier;" who has given his life and the strength of his manhood to the cause of human freedom; who has fought, and fought nobly from the cow-camp to, in and through, the legislative halls of his adopted State, for his fellows and a broader manhood, here and now—in this present world; who has been my friend from early manhood; has had faith in me and my work and has stood by me during the darkness and now holds my hand at the dawn; to

HON. LOT RAVENSCROFT,

of Ashland, Clark County, Kansas this volume is dedicated by

The Author.

The Child Slaves

God of life! I see the children,
Maimed of brow and sunk of chest.
They are toiling in the east-land;
They are toiling in the west.
Lifting to thy sky wan faces,
Numbly longing to be free!
Standing, helpless, in thy presence,
As memorials to thee.

God of life! I see the children;
Drooping like the plant which dies!
I can see no gleam of promise
In their sad and vacant eyes.
Eyes from which is gone the lustre;
Gone the hall mark of the soul!
For which lack some one must answer
When Thine angel calls the roll.

God of life! I see the children;
Shrunk of limb and tendon cramped,
Pace a sentry's beat, through darkness,
Where the hosts of Greed are camped!
Talon handed; primal visaged;
Signs of that dread curse which waits
Till our coveteousness, gold drunken,
Draw it, cased, within our gates.

God of life! I see the children
Murdered in the paths of peace;
Crowded to the grave by legions,
That earth's tinsel may increase!

Children like He, whom Thou sent us,
Gathered round Him one far day,
Saying: "Wouldst thou enter heaven?
Let these show to thee the way."

God of life! I see the children,
Kept, by fraud, from life's chief goal.
Of all things of earth the cheapest
Seems to be an human soul;
Of less worth than passion's promise,
Bantered 'neath an evil star—
God of life! our crimes against them
Nearer hell are, than is war!

Character

If good be near you, and you find
Your life toward it is inclined,
Be to past lives and precepts blind;
Unto it your own pathway trace;
Look for no footprints; see no face
Of other; nor trust to the grace
Of gods or men, if you would stand
With aught save borrowed wealth in hand.
Thus it will be an wholly new
And strange discovery to you;
Wherewith you may all worlds subdue,
And by subdueing grow to be
A soul, broad-shouldered, grand and free,
Untrammeled as the restless sea;
So that, departing, men may scan
Your life and say: "There lived a man."

Stained

I stand at the station as the gray light of dawn
Comes stealing and deepening and widening on,
And the trains, heavy laden, go rumbling by
As the heralds of sunrise leap into the sky;
While the outlines of things are from dimness released
And show sharply against an incarnadine east;
In the hush of the morning appears, doubly plain,
On each object of vision a dark crimson stain.

There is blood on the rails! In the smoke and the din
Of the mills where they rolled them, they ladled it in;
There is blood on the wires! in the place they were drawn
'Twas by piracy filched from the brain and the brawn
Of strong men, my brethren; men, joint heirs with me,
To the fullness of earth, and the sky and the sea.

There is blood on the engine and blood on the train
And the ties, and the bed for them, carry a stain.
On the panels and roof of the coach where I ride
Are stains which no varnish nor gilding can hide!
And the click of the wheels, as they rapidly roll,
Repeat: "We have value; there's none to a soul."

There is blood on the stones which men crush in the street,
And stains on the pavement that rings 'neath my feet;
The parks, brightly lit, where suave indolence strolls
Are garnished by anguish and unshriven souls.
There are stains on the buildings men raise in contempt
Of their God—and his house is not wholly exempt!

The fountains along the highway have their source
In the Moloch of Greed, in the temple of Force,

And mixed half and half with their thirst quenching streams,
Is the ichor of life and the substance of dreams;
In proof that the pagan but changes his name
And remains, as to ends, and in essence, the same.

There is blood on the fields where the meadow larks sing;
'Tis the record of God of where king strove with king;
Where ignorance and hate, little knowing for why,
Have warred, blindly warred, 'neath a pitying sky;
And the blood of the worker, for idlers increase,
Baptizes the walls of the temple of peace.

There is blood on the carpets I have in my home!
From the mills which grind children as grist they have come;
On the crystal I own are deep, dark stains of red,
And even my books chant a dirge for the dead—
The dead who to others were dear as the one
Who from my own side into dreamland has gone.

There are stains on all things which surround us today
And I question if water to wash them away
Is held by the earth, or the deep outer void
Where recompense waits for they who have destroyed
The image of God by insidious wiles
Of commerce; they who, in exchange for the smiles
Of the wanton of trade and the god of increase,
Have innocence slain in the temple of peace.

God's Escrow

Down the mystic, Shadow Valley,
Where the leaves of healing grow;
Where the strong and the decrepit
And the aged and children go;
There are half remembered visions
Waiting, that they may entrain
With the things which we have strangled
In our maddened rush for gain.

There are brains, benumbed by fancies;
There are brains distraught and wild;
There are vampire brains, grown weary
Of a world they had defiled;
There are brains, which love has fashioned;
There are brains, deformed by woe;
Down the mystic, Shadow Valley
Where the leaves of healing grow.

There are eyes, too soon grown weary
Of the sunset and the dawn;
Eyes, from which the present visions
Drove the dread of farther on;
There are eyes which never glistened
At the sunset's afterglow;
Down the mystic, Shadow Valley,
Where the leaves of healing grow.

There are little hands, unwelcome;
Night-tossed hands, without a name;
There are palms, cursed and unholy
In which stuck the price of shame;

There are locked hands, locked forever
By the things which grovelers know
Down the mystic, Shadow Valley
Where the leaves of healing grow.

There are fingers, young and rosy;
There are fingers, gnarled and old;
There are children's talon fingers,
Fashioned by the lust for gold;
There are fingers, cramped and knotted;
Fingers crippled by a blow,
Down the mystic, Shadow Valley
Where the leaves of healing grow.

By the sword which guards God's Eden;
By His phantom foot and horse;
By the joys of highest heaven;
By the depths of earth's remorse;
We must meet these! They are waiting,
Waiting there, in God's escrow;
Down the mystic, Shadow Valley
Where the leaves of healing grow.

Beyond the Pecos

Vistas stretching to'ard the sunset;
Vistas reaching to'ard the dawn;
Flowers and palms and palms and flowers;
Haze wrapped roadways leading on.

Crag and peak and green shot mesa
Flung against a sapphire sky;
Fall and sweep and rush of water
With the brown trail winding by.

The Cry of The Wild

O God, give me freedom! freedom!
If but for a day—an hour,
I am tired of the chieftain's bondage,
Of the shackles of mooted power;
I am tired of the alien peoples
I have bartered my soul to save—
The one who brings freedom to others
Is ever himself a slave;
A slave to their childish phantoms,
Their wayward and witless ways,
Fashioned by sire and grandsire
Between darkened walls of days—
O God, give me freedom! freedom!
Though it be but the spurious thing
Possessed by the low browed peasant
Who daily curses his king.

O God, give me freedom! freedom!
Let me be, as I once was, free,
I am tired of the iron purple
Of the guardians degree;
Let me walk, if for only a moment,
With the children, the primrose path,
Unheeding alike the sunshine
Of smiles, or the cloud of wrath.
Grant this and though thereafter,
In the galleys, with added pain,
I pull the oar of a leader
And wear the heaviest chain,
I'll remember, with joy and gladness,
The kindness of thy decree—

This memory will lighten my labors
Through all eternity.

O God, give me freedom! freedom!
If for only a runner's breath,
I'm tired of the moulded heirlooms
That came at my father's death;
Tired of the pride of family
I must stretch to measure to;
Tired of the ancient wheel ruts
In the lanes I stumble through;
Tired of the thoughtless censure,
Of the one who stands alone,
By the swart and darkened children
Of the man of the age of stone—
O God, give me freedom! freedom!
What is your eternity,
Or any thing hereafter
Unless I again be free.

Give Us Results

"Give us results!" By what token
Do you ask that we give you them?
By the reasoning of Japeth's ruthless clan;
Or the stealth of the tribe of Shem?
By the empty, unrequited,
Hard hands of the sons of Ham?
By the altar fire of marauding sire,
Or the price of a purchased dam?

By the Spirit of troubled waters
Shall we bring you, from over seas,
The things which your sodden trader's breed

Cry for; from their bended knees?
Shall we bring them thence with never
A care, nor fear, nor tear,
For the hearts we break nor the graves we make,
In the face of the reckoning year?

"Give us results!" Will you herald
Them forth and grow strangely dumb
As to devious ways and artful means,
If by such, perchance, they come?
The wear of the way takes substance
From the wheel and adds thereto,
In flake and streak, the things which speak
Of the mire it traveled through.

"Give us results!" Aye give us
Results; but let them be
The unstained ones which only come
When the soul and the hand are free!
The results of the Great King's highway—
The way where men are made;
Not the soiled ones by which Cain's sons
Chain Death to their shoulder blade!

Blunders

Today I saw a little waif, one of the submerged millions,
With unshod feet walk down a street
Where men guard useless billions;
To make a Moloch of their trade, and to their shrine of barter
Bring man and matron, boy and maid, a custom cursed
I looked upon her weazened face, [martyr;

From which the light of childhood
Had faded, leaving no more trace
Than zephyrs in the wildwood;
And while I looked the heavens lowered
And nature's forces thundered;
"This is the cruse where wrath is stored,
Because mankind has blundered."

Today I saw in dimlit piles, with many a steel-barred case-
Men walk alone and there atone [ment,
For some forbear's abasement;
By process I cannot describe, an unrequited labor
They learn the tongue of Ishmael's tribe, that knows no
I looked upon them moving near— [friend nor neighbor;
Guard-led and guard-surrounded—
Unto the Chapel, there to hear
Confusion worse confounded;
And while I gazed a still voice came
Saying; "Why have you wondered?
That this should be done in my name
Is proof that men have blundered."

I scanned the record of my past for promise of the morrow,
And found each page, in youth or age,
Blotted by some great sorrow; [binded
By some fell hand unseen, unknown, a burden has been
Upon my shoulders and alone I've walked life's highway
I stumble in the way, and where [blinded.
I should walk prince and sovereign
I crawl, a vassal, bowed with care,
For usurpers to govern;
I often question in my dole
Why joy is from me sundered,
But all the time my weary soul
Knows somewhere men have blundered.

The Joyless Men

They have scraped the fins from the mountainside
And burrowed it like the mole;
They have warped and lashed great iron staves
To a prostrate totem pole.
They have raised the trail across the marsh
And eased it over the hill;
They have stalked the mountain, as caribou
Are stalked by the ones who kill.

They have planted their uncarved totem poles
Like stakes for the salmon's run,
And crowned them with a giant's bead
That glistens in the sun.
They have planted them thick, from shore to crag,
In long and winding strings,
And bound them firmly, crown to crown,
With the iron sinew that sings.

Flung sinuous, like a driver's lash,
Or like the land fowl flies,
Is the hot, black breath of the wondrous sledge;
Their sledge of iron that cries;
That cries like a wounded walrus bull
When the spear has pierced his side,
And pants, as the lead dogs pant, for the weal
Of a tribe unsatisfied.

And down where the walrus used to bask
They've builded themselves a town—
These men with the cold, stern, somber face,
Who work when the sun is down,

And down where the salmon berries grew
And ripened beneath the skies,
They've builded a hut for the wondrous sledge—
Their sledge of iron that cries.

They are wondrous men, these joyless men;
These men from the summer lands;
Who give their lives with a smile and cheer
To feed the work of their hands!
These men who conquer the frozen seas
And harness the powers of air;
Who war with the land and curse their god
Should he loose the thongs of their care.

They have stretched their hands toward the stars
And plucked them from the skies,
And hung them low to light the trail
Of their sledge of iron that cries.
They have broken the pack in the windward straits
And cloven the heart of the floe;
They have chained the glacier to its bed
And made a toy of the snow.

The walrus cries from the far off ice
And the seal moans by the sea;
The new has come with these joyless men
And the old goes out with me.
They will harry the silence out of the north
And winnow it in between
The hoar, white edge of my father's land
And the edge of their land of green.

They will break the peace of a thousand years,
With bugle, and horse, and drum;
To pave the way that they may pray
For the peace of a time to come,

They will parcel the land by the river's thread
And hold it by stake and stone;
They will speak to the hungry, with the wind,
And watch how the smoke is blown.

They will break the thongs of their father's pledge
To kill on the border line;
They will bring us their Book, to buoy our souls,
And sink us with their wine.
They will take our fathers burden off
And bind upon our back,
One strange and new, which we cannot bear,
And curse us for our lack.

They will take the gods that we have known—
Our gods of sea and land—
And give us their own, whom even they
Seem not to understand.
They will take the legends from my tribe;
Unpeople river and brook.
They will break the law of a thousand tongues
And judge us by a book.

They will dim the law of the otter's slide
With precept of their own,
And barter the fire of a fevered soul
For the glow of a polished stone.
They will raze the mountain and lift the earth
And ravage the far, vast skies;
For the weal of the sinew that sings and sings
And the sledge of iron that cries.

The lead dogs will forget the trail—
The legends of my clan
Will die, as youth born visions die,
For there will be no man

Of all my tribe to hand them on;
Much less one to receive
Them from another—they teach ill
Who do not first believe.

I have watched beside my father's grave;
But none will watch by mine.
I have learned my dogs the trail; their whelps,
Like the white bears cubs, will whine
Unmastered; things which came
With peace will go with stress,
And in the lodge of the joyless men
Is much of forgetfulness.

The squaws will halt at the trader's door;
Our strong young men will draw
Nigh to his oracle and for
A precept trade their law.
There's portents of misfortune, dire
Mischance and fearsome things,
That come with the iron sledge that cries
And the wondrous sinew that sings.

The Call of the West

I have heard the West a-calling;
Clearer, sweeter than a bride's,
Comes a voice from out the vastness
Where the man-grown boy abides;
Where the sweet, the strange, the splendid,
Lion-hearted, noble boy,
Like a prince rides ways of manhood,

Bearing with him youthful joy;
Bearing with him all the jewels
Of a mother's sympathy,
And a Faith, unawed, unfaltering,
In his God and Destiny;
Strong to ride the dusty highway;
Strong to linger by the stream;
Strong to know his own and claim it;
Strong to do and strong to dream.

I have heard the West a-calling;
Whatsoever bauble prize
Waits for me, its needs must seek me
Underneath the Western skies—
Seek me where the bouyant promise
Of the earth, the sky, the air,
Is not veiled; where hearts are stronger
Than the spirit of despair.
It must seek me, if it find me,
In the free and boundless West;
Where the base, the false, the hollow,
Find no place where they may rest;
Where the winds give wider learning
Than is held by any school,
And "survival of the fittest,"
Not "the strongest," is the rule.

What if there be bleak prairies?
What if desert wastes of sand?
What if God's own workshop stillness
Like a mantle cloaks the land?
What if strong suns blister daily?
What if winds be chill at night?
There, at least, no forced convention
Makes grotesque all primal right;

There the hands, however wayward,
Have not learned to grasp and hold
Only things which stand as tokens
Of the man-made power of gold.
There the heart leaps free and youthful;
Stranger to all bars and bounds—
O, I've heard the West a-calling
And there are no other sounds.

A Souvenir

'Twas a summer long ago
That I wrote a billet deaux—
Youth-fed summer—when the world was on its knees,
And I hid it near the stream—
Grave and cradle of our dream—
And you got it and you read it Belle Marquise.

Though you turned and gave your hand
To a league or two of land;
Leaving me to bear my burden over seas;
You have kept it through the years,
With their cares and fears and tears;
You have kept it and you read it Belle Marquise.

Though rebellion and unrest
It awakens in your breast
As you drain the cup you've chosen to the lees;
Though it jeopardize your name
You will keep it from the flame—
Aye, you'll keep it and you'll read it Belle Marquise.

Testamentry

I'd rather give you a free mind,
My boy, to have and hold,
Than all the lands in all the earth,
Or all its worthless gold.

Then take your father's words, my boy,
Let them be food and drink,
Act as the freemen ever act,
Think as the freemen think.

Let no name bind you to the past,
Nor conjure from afar;
Avoid, as though a pestilence,
The fever born of war.

A hut beside a summer stream,
Beneath the arching skies,
Is better than a palace, boy,
Where mind and manhood dies.

Gather the flowers along the way,
Rest 'neath each pleasant tree;
'Tis well to be forehanded, boy,
But better to be free.

Rather than, in the purple clad,
Reap where you have not sown,
Go barefoot, but go like a Prince,
To claim your right, your own.

There's little in the boast of kings,
There's little in a name,
The velvet hand is oftenest
The tainted palm of shame.

Be strong, be grand, the puny things
That hold weak minds in awe,
Are not for you, therefore, be free,
Obey the primal law.

Are not for you—and why? forsooth,
Behind both you and me,
A thousand generations stand
Of common folk and free.

The Hero

Disaster's track behind his back and sodden sky ahead;
Yet through the wrack he will not slack his hand, though hope be dead;
He will not quail, though Fate may rail and Fortune guard her bars;
He knows the trail to his entail swings past them, to the stars;
The pace may kill, but upward still, his feet, flame shrouded, tend
Toward the hill from which he will unto reward ascend.

The clouded mind will worship kind; it has done since the morn
In which the wind came strong behind the sun and Cain was born;
Though it conceive, and real believe, a mirage, big with dole;
Though it may grieve and pluck his sleeve, upon his franchised soul
Is the red mark of they who hark not to the halt and lame;
Nor to the dark, but fan their spark of life into a flame.

More than on steel the old world's weal hangs on his potent arm;
And true and leal through each ordeal he guides and shields from harm.
It is his fate, without the gate, unguarded and alone,
To toil and wait, that church and state may come into their own;
His campfire's gleams, in conquering streams, fling back the Cossack shade
That round it teems, and of his dreams a future age is made.

The torch, the night, cannot affright: he is not fear ordained.
He sees the light, hid from sight of hunchback souls and chained!
Gethsemane is for the free; not for the shackled slave,
And through it he presents a plea which bars death and the grave.
The copper's toss that wins earth's dross, he counts an idle thing;
As gain, not loss, the middle cross, if he die there a king.

What Profit?

They have cut the plains in a thousand fields
And parcelled them out among
The brood who love the clang of steel
And the sound of a brazen tongue;
The ones by whom a flower's perfume
Is flouted and scorned and spurned;
Whose nostrils can only sense the reek
Of the earth; when a furrow is turned.

They have given to them a parchment power;
By which they may have and hold
The right to follow a plow in peace,
Until they are bent and old;
The right to rest in a fetid room,
Shut in from the arching sky;
To say to their fellow: "All this is mine;
By the power—", of a printed lie!

They will lock the door of their empty souls
And lean on the things outside,
And gladly walk in the way of pain
If the ones who praise may ride!
They will wear the shackles of class and caste;
Of their acres; their herds; their flocks;
If they may ride to the grave in state
And sleep in a polished box.

They will trade the strength of their manhood's years
And barter their womanhood,
For a cup of gall, from a velvet hand,
If they be but told: "'Tis good."
They will pour their sweat at Mammon's shrine
And give him their flesh and blood,
And rail at the Hindoo mother who flings
Her child to the Ganges' flood.

They have cut the plains in a thousand fields—
But where does the profit lie
If wealth increase a thousand fold
And mind and manhood die?
What profit to earth; or what to man,
Is there in a thousand fields,
If the opiate and the gear of a slave
Are all that the thousand yields?

For What?

We met; he is more gray today,
Five added years have worn
His life along the dusty way
Where hope dies and is born.

Upon his brow and in his face
Was then small sign of care
And only just a ghostly trace
Of silver in his hair.

Today it took a second sight
To catch a glimpse of gold;
A gleam like the faint hint of night
Which shadows sometimes hold.

He spoke, as when greeted last,
Of something, "just ahead,"
I did not question of the past;
I knew that it was dead.

Knew by the lines which seamed his brow
And spoke of tears unshed;
Knew by his leaping from the now,
Toward the, "just ahead."

And as I called that other year
To mind, my wonder rose;
That he should wear life's galling gear
For only board and clothes!

That he should barter present joy
For phantoms, "just ahead—"
Should trade the free heart of a boy
For withered things and dead.

What Matters

It matters not what was his name,
Nor where his place of birth,
Nor by what lineage he came
Unto this present earth;
But that his soul was strong and true,
Broadshouldered, grand and free,
It matters, and will matter through
Our God's Eternity.

It matters not his father's place,
Nor what his mother's dower,
Nor contour of a grandame's face,
Nor yet a grandsire's power—
Whether barefoot, half clad and loathed,
He may have trod the ling,
Just so, however shod or clothed,
He trod it like a king.

It matters not what was his tongue,
Nor that he understood
The whyfore of the shrines among
His common brotherhood;
But that he stooped to play the knave,
Or filled the narrow span
Between the cradle and the grave
With stature of a man.

It matters not Faith held the helm,
Or whether doubts and fears
Came, like a tidal wave, to whelm
And buffet through his years;

But that with tempest hovering near,
Mid spray and wrack of sky,
Duty need call but once to hear
The answer: "Here am I."

It matters not if oft he fell,
Or stumbled overmuch,
Or wavered on the brink of hell,
Or felt the Spoiler's clutch;
If falling gave him charity
And wavering brought him will
To from the deadening clutch shake free
And stumble upward still.

It matters not if swift his soul,
Or laggard on the way,
Toward the universal goal
Which all must touch some day;
If he have kept his child heart pure
And did the best he could;
Have learned to suffer and endure
For all his brotherhood.

He Was My Friend

He was my friend. He never knew the cost
Of his faith in me. Whatsoe'er he lost
By reason of his fealty, was to him
An undiscovered country. Enemies, who tossed
My name upon the flotsam covered breast
Of public rumor, fed by minds as dim

As those which first, above the murky rim
Of dawning reason, saw, between the west
And east, man's star of promise and of destiny,
Were his foes also; foes unto the end;
With whom he made no truce; he was my friend
Who gave me freedom; as himself was free.

He was my friend, and in return I gave
Him freemen's homage. Homage of the slave
Is not the tribute which friend takes of friend,
No more than would the valient and the brave
Take tribute from a woman, whom his arm
Had plucked from dangers; dangers which portend
Her utter ruin and a wanton's end.
I would have suffered evil, if thereby all harm
Could have been barred from out the sacristy
Of his pure soul, and since beyond my ken
He now has passed, this present life has been
More fearsome to me than Eternity.

Chance

I met him under a foreign sky;
The scion of a moribund race;
But full of the fire that will not die
And the lines of the thoroughbred in his face.

It was all by seeming chance we met,
And seeming chance that I took his hand—
"Mere hap," the world would say, and yet,
We two seemed dimly to understand.

He was alien in land and blood to me
And unto his kin and his country leal;

But his mind was broad and his soul was free
And each of us held the same ideal.
What mattered it then, the creed he held?
What mattered it where his altars were?
He was a spirit born brother of mine,
With a soul like the Infinite, strong and rare.

We, haltingly, spoke in a foreign tongue,
Some meagre words at our command,
But out of the pauses between them sprung
A language which each could understand.
What mattered it then, a king's frontiers
Or the boundary stones by a people set?
We met, full heirs of all lands and years,
And when we parted our cheeks were wet.

The Warriors

From the chief who won and held his crown
By the strength of a wooden spear,
Up to the king who bounds his realm
With a moveable frontier;
The spirit of war has walked with man
And footsore, in his dole,
He views it not as the aftermath
Of the struggle of his soul.

Behind each war that wastes the blood
And the treasure of mankind,
Is the sharp, fierce pain of a soul's travail
In the bivouac of the mind;
The cause may rank as a woman scorned
Or a people defied, indeed!
We speak of the color of bud and bloom,
But the hue is in the seed.

Caveat

Give your life's wine freely
To the mob in the World's broad road;
The haunting fear, lest they fail to cheer,
Will be ever your keenest goad;
Sell them the soul God gave you;
They will rend it at their feast!
Then should you fare to the lion's lair
Call not the lion; "beast!"

Go bear their self-formed burdens;
Go walk the way of the Cross
For them and theirs and they and their heirs
Will exult at your loss!
There are wolves in the open country,
And lank, lean wolves in town;
That will lick your hand when you upright stand
And fang you when you're down!

Desire for the bay and laurel
Is good; but, O friend, beware!
It is not fame, their wild acclaim,
And their greasy caps in air.
Serve them, if so it please thee,
But their path is scattered o'er,
Unmarked by stones, with the crumbling bones,
Of they who have served before.

When 'Tis Mine to Journey Outward

Lord, when you command; "Attention!" and then; "Forward! forward march!"
And I catch the step in passing underneath the shadow arch;
Let the lightnings flash before me, let the deep voiced thunders roll,
Keeping time and setting measure for the cadence of my soul,
And I'll walk the Shadow Valley—walk it like a lance at rest;
Walk it as all they have walked it who've been nurtured by the West.

When 'tis mine to journey outward—aye, to journey out and far,
To Thy city where the records of my days and actions are;
Let it not be in the stillness, or when summer winds rush warm,
Take me, if it be Thy pleasure, in the wildness, in the storm;
And I'll hail it with all gladness, mounting on the shrieking wind,
With no sigh, nor tinge of sadness, for the world I leave behind.

I forget sometimes of mornings; I remember not at noon;
I am listless in the evening when the night birds call and croon;
But your storm clouds, massed menacing, in the flashings dimly gray
And their twisted, azure columns, moving ever and away;

Call me back to life and duty—strengthen memory's
weakened span,
Till I stand, unawed, before Thee in the stature of a man.

When the days are calm and peaceful and a stillness, like
a shroud,
Wraps the earth, I long for livid flashings, mirrored on a
cloud—
Long for night and wind and tempest, flying scud and
drive of rain,
And the tall oak of the forest writhing like a thing in
pain—
There is that within the tempest which is spirit kin to me;
That which lifts me nearer heaven, draws me closer unto
Thee.

Call me then, if so it please Thee, when the winds are
fierce and high
And Thy forces rush to battle, in the domain of the sky;
When the clouds, in shapes fantastic, dash themselves
through upper air,
And the tempest, with wild voices, crowds its terror
everywhere;
Call me then, and I will count it as the chiefest of my
gains,
And will tread the way appointed like a born Prince of
the Plains.

The Genius

Give him the wild, strange fever
That only the few have known,
And he'll learn the tongue of the wandering stars
And walk by himself, alone;

Yea, he will be a stranger,
An alien in the land,
His heritage—the rabble's curse,
For none of them understand.

Give him the wealth of India,
He will scatter it far and wide;
For the grief of the world is his to know,
While its joy must be denied;
His heart is the old world's magnet
To gather each tear and moan,
And the pulsing heart of the hopeless poor
Is an answering beat to his own.

Give him the wreath of laurel,
He will smile, but he knows that he
Is the sum of the past and present,
And beyond, to eternity;
Yea, he must feel the future
As the coarser feel the now;
His is the great collective brain
And the individual brow.

Give him the love of woman;
Go bind him and none can tell,
Whether he'll walk with the Saints of God,
Or sink to the deepest hell;
Yet it were better to bind him,
Far better, for be it known;
If 'tis sorrow to walk the way as twain
It is black despair alone,

Give him an open entrance,
Or a door of the clearest glass;
For he cannot know the knock of they
Who come with the things that pass;

Yea, he stands a giant
In learning, both strange and wild,
But in the lore of the counting house
The man is only a child.

Give him a place among you,
Or banish him far away,
His dreams will live when the things you raise
Are crumbling to decay;
Yea, he is only a dreamer,
A child of a world-old pain,
But though the earth dissolve in mist
The dream will ever remain.

And the Angel Said "Write"

Life is not for wounding, brother;
Better heal the thoughtless hurts,
That are given by the rabble,
Ignorant of just deserts.
Aye, too often do we censure
When we do not understand
All the force behind the failings—
Brother, write them on the sand.

Write it on the sand my brother;
Whatsoe'er the action be,
Emanating from thy fellow,
Standing between he and thee.
Only God may keep the record;
Only He may understand
Action, and if any fault thee;
Brother, write it on the sand.

The Sound of The Master Chord

In the mellow, sound swept transept,
Of the hall of melody,
Gathered once all of the gifted
In the embrace of the sea;
And a thousand harps re-echoed
All the music of the spheres,
Weaving into pulsing garlands
Melodies from all the years.
Long each gathered there had labored
To produce a perfect strain;
To distill a mystic essence
From earth's pleasure and earth's pain.
Suddenly each harp was silent,
For without, upon the sward,
Stood a child who, smiling, sounded
On strange pipes, the Master Chord.

Once a maiden, housed securely
With the favored few apart,
Listened to a thousand suitors
Tell the old tale of the heart;
But she scorned them all, and rising,
Wondering at her disdain,
Each, within the vaults of manhood,
Locked his secret and his pain;
But a swineheard called unto her,
From the highway: "Follow me!"
And she looked not back but answered:
"Unto all eternity,"
And they wondered that she followed
Through bleak ways and called him: "Lord,"

But within her heart had sounded,
Once for all, the Master Chord.

Once a youth, hot and impeteous,
Set his lance at rest and hurled,
With his gage, the young man's challenge
In the face of all the world.
Many answered and he met them
In the lists and on the field,
And they knew him as one worthy,
By his scars and dented shield;
But one day, with princes shouting
And his lady's eyes aflame;
With his sovereign loudly calling,
Over all the din, his name,
Suddenly he wheeled and ordered
His victorious pennant lowered,
For, within his heart had sounded,
Above all, the Master Chord.

Once a warrior led his legions
'Till they conjured in his name;
'Till each one was willing, eager,
That his chief should ride to fame
Over him, as but a unit
In the broad, triumphal way,
Leading unto future conquests
From the victories of today.
And they cried: "Be thine the glory,
Though our ranks be thinned and torn,
Give command, for us the carnage;
For this purpose were we born,"
And they promised him an empire,
But the warrior sheathed his sword,
For, above their shouts had sounded,
For his ears, the Master Chord.

Jus Singulare

I cannot be another; this would be
Stagnation, mental death, more to be feared
Than sure annihilation, which for want
Of knowledge of all Nature's teachings, some still say
Shall come hereafter. Nay, although it please but one,
One, and one only, of all they who walk
The earth with reason, I must only be
Myself alone. All of the glorious deeds
And noble actions, holy impulses,
Of great and pure of all the ages past,
Or freighted present, must be only held
As finger boards that point, not for the place
Where I must pitch my tent. I cannot dwell
With them: nor lead, nor follow, lest I should
Become but a mere mirror, and not the
Creative thing that God intended, else
He had refrained from making separate
And individual beings, 'round each twain
Of which, (although twin brethern, born and reared
In the same home) throwing a separate
Environment. Nay, if I would have life,
And add unto myself the potency
Which makes men strong to endure and abide
Through two eternities, I cannot be
Sage, prophet, nor another; I must be
Myself alone. All of the borrowed things
Some day, in augmented greatness shall
Return unto the fount or place from whence
They came. Things of our own, though they be mean,
And paltry, yet the same are ours, and ours
Alone. In all the universe of God

Exists no power able to wrest them from
Our hands; and no strong voice can say;
"These which thou claimest are another's goods,
By right of prior ownership." Let me
Be whatsoe'er the powers within me shall
Decree; be that the far, thin air, or the
Dark ways of subterranean cavern; the
Free flight of eagles, or the chained life of
The clod, but let me be myself alone.

I cannot be another; I must be
Myself alone, if I would triumph o'er
The second death, and all things else that fright
Small minds and halting reason; which came to
The earth prenatally deformed. I must
Weave into all the fabric of my soul
Things which with my unaided hands I have
Planted, nurtured, harvested. In the loom
The God of Nature gave me, I must place
The warp of my intentions, and so watch
The shuttle of my thoughts and deeds, that when
'Tis finished, though grotesque and crude, or fit
For angels' courts or princes' feet, no one
Can say that there exists its like in all
The realms infinite; the warp and woof
And pattern must be mine—and mine alone.

What Can I Do?

What can I do for you, my brother;
Caught in the eddy of Mammon's power;
Learning the fairest desires to smother;
Loosing your child-heart, hour by hour;
What can I do?

What can I do, O, worker, weary
Of the ceaseless tramp, in the circling way,
To dispel the clouds, low-hung and dreary,
And help you live like a man today;
What can I do?

What can I do; O, you who are treading
The strange winepress of anothers gain;
To lessen your fear; your slavish dreading;
To loose the bands of your numbing pain;
What can I do?

What can I do; O, hopeless woman,
To bring your visions and dreams anew?
To teach you that they whom you fear are human
And under the self same law as you;
What can I do?

What can I do, O, you who are playing,
With toys of empire for smiles of kings,
To teach you that it is a truthful saying
That all save men are passing things;
What can I do?

What can I do; O, blinded nation,
That struggles a tottering throne to save,
To teach you there is no rank or station
In the democracy of the grave;
What can I do?

Could I be the bearer of freedom sent thee;
The freedom which purges all things of dross;
O, could I but bring you the souls nepenthe
I would willingly walk the way of the cross!
What can I do?

Affinity

One day a gifted soul arose
And he spoke as a seer in stress,
But the hearers turned to their repose,
For his words were meaningless;
But over the emerald sea, away
From kin and his fatherland,
They called him great, and good, for they
His words could understand.

One day a singer paused and trilled
A song, and every note
Was clearer than had ever filled
The wild-wood songsters throat;
Some few came from the market place
And wondered why the song,
And watched the changes in his face,
As children view a throng.

Again one day he sung the song,
As he thought, to stranger ears;
But they cried: "Why have you tarried long?
We have waited weary years;
We have waited long and tiresome days,
To worship at your shrine,
To hear you, to our hymn of praise,
Make answer: 'Brethren, mine."

One night filled with promethean fire,
An artist hand awoke
The slumbering soul of a minstrel's lyre,
With more than a master's stroke;

But the listeners turned, their souls attuned
To strains in a minor key,
And the player wandered, for none communed
With one so strange as he.

Again, in like similitude,
He struck the slumbering lyre,
And into the eyes of the multitude
There leaped an answering fire;
His hand swept defter, for he felt
Each stroke and shade of tone
Vibrate their heartstrings, and he knelt
And answered with his own.

Ashes, Only Ashes

Ashes, only ashes—
Once a youth gave ear and credence
To the voice that calls each name,
And he took the white-hot pathway
Leading to the Hall of Fame;
And he passed within its portals
Hand-carved portals, towering high—
While the rabble gazed and shouted;
"There's a new star in our sky."
And within were thrones and scepters,
Jeweled stoles and mural crowns;
Ermine robes and parchment honors;
Gold insignia; broidered gowns—
But a sound came; of light footfalls
Tinkling on a puncheon floor,
And he knew all these were ashes—
Ashes only—nothing more.

Ashes, only ashes—
Once a man from out a casement,
In a stately marble pile,
Gazed upon his world and questioned:
"Is it really worth the while?"
He had bartered things eternal
For a mouldering estate;
As a witless world counts greatness
He had striven to be great.
His, the steel sinews of commerce;
His, a sail on every tide;
His, a hostelry for servants,
Where his starved soul could abide—
But he missed the old-home flowers
Growing just outside the door,
And he knew all these were ashes—
Ashes only—nothing more.

Ashes, only ashes—
Once a woman cursed in fourfold,
Cheek, and lip, and hair, and eye,
Listened to the supplication:
"Smile upon us, lest we die."
And the years brought gold and jewels,
Place and power and acclaim;
And the ones who guided nations,
Stooped to conjure in her name;
Hers, wide halls and murmuring fountains;
Tufted floors and gilded stairs;
Echoing to incessant tramping
Of the strong men of affairs;
But she longed for other footfalls
And the olden love they bore;
For she knew all these were ashes—
Ashes only nothing more.

Black Sheep

"Black sheep!" yes, so ye name them in your self-complaisancy;
Because of some strong impulse, within them, to be free;
Because they chose the pathway which skirts the brink of hell
Rather than list to tinklings of some sleek leaders bell;
Incessant, maddening tinklings; than wine fed dreams more vain;
As vacuous as the vaporous clouds which follow after rain.

"Black sheep!" aye, by what standard, ye kept ones, judge ye them?
Mayhap ye are not worthy to touch their garments hem!
By what chart of experience do ye say their ways are wild,
Or teach that stars they follow are baleful, dream beguiled?
Are there no ways permitted to any, save the ones
Ye travel? may it not be that some dim stars are suns?

"Black sheep!" come forth ye censors and stand at my right hand
And answer me: have one of you the power to understand
Why ye have never wandered from your accidental way?
Aye, in your frozen spotlessness, declare, why do ye pray;
"Forgive us our tresspasses?" can it be ye cannot see
That the turpitude of tresspass is not measured by degree?

"Black sheep!" mayhap the cloud of wrath ye deem hangs o'er their ways
Is but the veil of your own eyes; woven of toneless days.
Mayhap a shepherd guards their path, one whom ye cannot see,

Because your eyes are holden by your dogma of degree.
What if their bones shall bleach for aye in some ghost haunted glen;
'Tis not that death has called for them, nor how, nor where, nor when.

"Black sheep!" mayhap, but O they know the chasm and the pass;
The canon where the torrent foams; the glaciers dred crevasse;
The wan and ghostlike arms of pine, flung upward to'ard the sky;
The eagle's shadow on the rocks; the gray wolf's hunting cry;
The stone which loosens neath the foot; the treacherous tuft of sod;
The barren crags; the sheer rock walls, the summits nearest God!

Because of This

"O, I love you, love you, love you!" whispered neath the palm or pine,
Brings an argosy of magic, golden sail,
And sends one into the forest and another to the mine,
And another cruising down a far sea trail;
Tis because of this we labor, 'tis because of this we toil;
Tis because of this the wars of earth have been;
Tis because of this the ocean's bosom bears a pirates spoil
And her floors are strewed with whitened bones of men.

"O, I love you, love you, love you!" when the blood is young and warm;
Makes us see an angel face against the pane,
And we kiss a hand toward it, as we wrap ourselves for storm,
And go down the ways to battle for her gain;
Tis because of this there's noontide; 'tis because of this there's night;
Tis because of this that brows both slant and tower;
Tis because of this advancing bugles sound to left and right;
Tis because of this we glory in our power.

"O, I love you, love you, love you!" whispered any time, or where,
Haltingly, or with a cadence deep and strong,
Has the thrill of martial music and the peace of mother's prayer,
And beneath its spell no way of earth is long—
Tis because of this there's value; 'tis because of this there's joy;
Tis because of this all things of worth have been;
Tis because of this the graybeard journeys outward, as a boy;
Tis because of this that heaven waits for men.

At the Bars

Coming out the woodland lot,
In the aftergloam;
Sauntering down toward the gate;
Swallows flying home;

Red star just a showing plain—
  Reckon it is Mars—
Cows are coming to'ards the lane—
  There's Nelly at the bars.

Lazy hum is in the air;
  Mournful whip-poor-will
Piping doleful to his mate,
  Just across the hill—
Cows are turning in the lane;
  Half a dozen stars
Twinkling out and back again,
  And Nelly at the bars.

Little fleecy cloud o' dust
  Trailing long behind;
Raising, like thick gossamers,
  Twisted and entwined—
Seems like Edens' come again;
  Nothing taints nor mars—
Cows are coming down the lane
  Just lounging to'ard the bars.

Just the peace of eventide;
  Just the silvery moon
Mounting upward silently;
  Just the pigeon's croon—
Someone flutters like a bird—
  Eyes as bright as stars—
Nelly whispered just a word—
  Cows are through the bars.

The Burning of the Leaves

We are drawing, drawing near,
To the yellow and the sere,
And the burning of the leaves,
Autumn leaves;
And I wonder what you'll bring,
That you've gathered since the spring,
To the burning of the leaves,
Fallen leaves.

I have brought with me tonight,
Petals of a lily white,
To the burning of the leaves,
Autumn leaves;
I'm consigning to the fire
Withered roses of desire,
At the burning of the leaves,
Fallen leaves.

All the promise of the spring,
All the summer's wondering,
At the burning of the leaves,
Autumn leaves;
Dance beside each ray of light,
Catch and spin it into night,
At the burning of the leaves,
Fallen leaves.

Will their essence linger near
And within the coming year,
Enter into other leaves
Vernal leaves;

Or will hands behind the veil
  Speed an outward laden sail,
To the burning of the leaves,
  Fallen leaves;

Though you may not understand
  Why my heart incited hand—
At the burning of the leaves,
  Yellow leaves:
Steals to thine and trembles so—
  Clasp it once, then turn and go,
From the burning of the leaves,
  Fallen leaves.

Only a Wave of the Hand

Only a wave of the hand, Marie,
  Only a wave of the hand;
Then to the trail where the way is free,
  And back to the summer land;
The trail that swings from the hoof swept plain,
  Over the far divide,
And I wonder if there is a bit of pain
  For me, on the other side.

Just a wave of the hand, Marie,
  We part as the ships that pass;
The hand of the lad will remembered be,
  As well as the hand of the lass;
The rose tipped fingers will come in dreams,
  When the sun is in the sky—
Only a wave of the hand, it seems,
  Is better than just, "good-by."

Only a wave of the hand, Marie;
I could hear you call, I ween,
I know you are near, but I cannot see
For the dull, thick mist between—
'Tis strange how quick and how black as night,
From the level lands below,
The fog drifts in—it was clear and bright
But a moment or two ago.

Just a wave of the hand, Marie,
Just a wave of the hand;
Then to the trail where the way is free,
And back to the summer land;
The trail that swings from the hoof swept plain,
Over the far divide,
And I wonder if there is a bit of pain
For me, on the other side.

God Thought so Too

I saw her at her evening camp
Calm, patient, and serene;
Upon her brow was heaven's stamp
Which marked her as a queen.
I did not question of her years—
Years meaningless to me—
I thought; from all their fears and tears
She has won victory;
A wreath unfading she has won;
There's nothing more to do;
Save close the book and say; "well done."—
It seems God thought so too,

He had fought nobly, from his youth,
But little wealth had wrung
From earth and air; save wealth of truth—
For this he was unsung.
The fortitude with which he faced
Life's duties led its curse
A captive; sealed him as first caste
Of all the Universe.
I thought; there's little now remains
For you to dare or do;
Save seek the Treasury of your gains—
It seems God thought so too.

I knew him when our lives were young
And every prospect fair;
Unmarred by envy's scorpion tongue;
When each of us was heir
Unto all covenants, sealed with hope,
Which to'ard the heavens incline—
A prince he walked where others grope
Prince of the seldom line!
When Perfidy, from out the sheath
Of secrecy, withdrew
Her sword, I thought; how sweet is death—
It seems God thought so too.

Mayhap *

Mayhap my friend was weary
And did not struggle sore;
Mayhap some spring song sounding,
From some celestial shore,

Lured him from tinsel spangles;
From candle, book, and bell;
From echoes and from shadows,
With substance real to dwell.

Mayhap his soul was forward
And blossomed ere the noon
And who shall say the reaper
Came heedless, or too soon?
Who shall affirm that profit
Is with the bended grain,
Which sickleless grows golden
And sapless? Is this gain?

Mayhap beyond his sunset,
He saw a glorious dawn;
And feeling strong to meet it,
He hurried, gladly, on.
Mayhap the droop of pinion
Greeting our shortened sight,
Was but prelude to power,
For higher, grander flight.

Mayhap my friend was weary
Of cares, and fears, and tears,
And yearned, with ceaseless longing,
To touch the peaceful years;
And having seen their dawning
Flush golden in his sky,
Sped on toward their portals;
As homing pigeons fly.

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* Upon receiving news of the death of my poet friend, Roy Farrell Greene. God rest his soul.

The Scattered Nation

O, my people, scattered nation;
  Sojourners in every clime;
Though your harps hang on the willows,
  God is with you all the time.

You have drank earth's bitter waters,
  Felt adversity's chill blast,
But for all your sons and daughters
  There remaineth rest at last.

You have strengthened every nation,
  And your blood has been a sign,
When 'twas poured as a libation,
  Of that nation's sure decline.

Cursed have been they who cursed you;
  Blessed have been they who blest,
And rewarded they who nursed you,
  With the jewel of God's rest.

Mighty men from out thy fountain
  Have their inspiration drawn,
And the Stone hewn from thy mountain
  Keys the archway of God's dawn.

Despite Envy's degradations,
  From thy loins have sprung kings;
Rulers of strange tongues and nations,
  Sovereigns of Eternal things.

O, my people, scattered nation;
  Sojourners in every clime;
God will bring your restoration
  In his own good day and time.

Christ on the Frontier

[After a long and threatning controversy as to their boundary lines, Chile and Argentina have come to an agreement. Their new frontier is well guarded. They have erected on it not a cordon of fortresses but a single statue of Christ.—Letter to Atlanta (Ga.) News]

When the Teuton, Slav and Saxon, in their all absorbing quest,
Take the slope toward the sunset where, perforce, each race must rest,
And the God of Justice leaves them, more in anger than in ruth,
Then the execrated Latin will renew his vanished youth;
Even now his bow of promise dimly spans the coming years,
With the Christ of ancient story standing guard on his frontiers.

As the Roman towered above the degradation of the north,
So his children bide in darkness, while a giant sallys forth,
Clad in all Rome's ancient glory, fierce, impatient of restraint,
Mixing with his strong new wine the toxic hemlock of attaint;
And the pendulum of time that swung them far in darkened years,
Stops, and starts again to power, with the Christ on their frontiers.

Behind each eternal precept there is an eternal life,
And a truth, which makes for greatness, is as jealous as a wife;
This is learned not, save in silence, introspective, and away

From all artificial standards, where the chastened soul may play
On untrammelled harp a strain, of which the weary sentry hears,
At low twelve, a faint dream echo, sounding down his King's frontiers.

So in silence they have learned it; between plains of Argentine
And the rugged lands of Chile, stands the Christ of Palestine;
The hoarse gutteral of the pine is drowned by whisperings of the palm,
And no fierce, defiant bugle breaks upon the morning calm,
As an earnest of the widow's sighs and of the orphan's tears
That must follow, as a Price, when arms establishes frontiers.

We, the Bible reading nations, who with zeal, and might and main,
Have strange peoples proselyted—when we found it to our gain;
We, who send afar our substance, for the glory of the Lord
Who, beside the brook of Cedron, gave command: "Put up thy sword,"
We, the self appointed fountains of all hypocritic tears,
Who with Christ extend our commerce and with Maxims our frontiers—

We, of whom weak tribes have learned—and learned it to their lasting hurt
That their lands and not their souls were what we labored to convert!

Learned that our interpetation of the Sermon on the Mount
Was a prelude to our bugles—that our Bible did not count
Any more than their appeals, their protestations or their tears,
When we once set out determined on extending our frontiers—

We will learn—there's no avoidance—that the law of recompense,
Which rules over righteous action, governs also false pretense;
Learn the bar of last resort is not the blood drunk court of kings;
That the great law of Remission deals not with material things;
Learn that power which is abiding, which shall widen through the years,
Comes not with the clash of armies, but with Christ on the frontiers.

Here's to you, O New World Latins, firey children of old Spain,
Yet unused to measuring Justice by the shortened yard of gain,
You have caught the early reverence we have lost and to our face
Shamed us in our pirate greed and in our tawdry pride of race;
You've remembered in your penance, in your bitterness and tears,
That a power above the Maxim finally fixes all frontiers.

Counting Out

Sat a child, with wondering eyes,
Half remembering Paradise;
Answering back the wren and thrush
Piping to her through the hush
Of the morning; counting slow,
In a measured tone and low:
"Intra, mintra, curley corn;
Apple seed and apple thorn."

Sat a maiden in whose breast
Was awakening an unrest
Which, until her soul were free,
Would remain a mystery;
Singing idly o'er and o'er—
Why she knew not, nor wherefore—
"Intra, mintra, curley corn,
Apple seed and apple thorn.
Wire, briar, limber lock,
Three geese in a flock,—"

Little joys and little sorrows;
Little errors; little truth;
Spirit kin to summer starlight,
Aye, a glorious thing is youth.

Sat a wife alone, the past
Rose before her and was cast
On her screen of memory;
What in virgin musings she
Fully purposed should occur,
Strangely had eluded her.

"Intra, mintra, curley corn,
Apple seed and apple thorn.
Wire, briar, limber lock,
Three geese in a flock;
One flew east and one flew west
And one flew o'er the cuckoo's nest."

Sat a mother at her work.
Where the quarter shadows lurk,
Weaving on life's mystic loom
Fabrics that with light and gloom
Interspersed are—warp and woof
Of conjecture and of proof;
"Intra, mintra, curley corn,
Apple seed and apple thorn.
Wire, briar, limber lock,
Three geese in a flock,
One flew east and one flew west
And one flew o'er the cuckoo's nest.
One——Two——Three——"

Greater joys and greater sorrows;
Thus it is and thus will be;
Somewhere we will know the reason,
Glorious is maturity.

Childless now, with weary eyes,
Catching gleams of Paradise,
Seeing things the aged see
Just this side Eternity;
Child and maiden, mother, wife,
Counting out degrees of life:
"Intra, mintra, curley corn,
Apple seed and apple thorn,
Wire, briar, limber lock,

Three geese in a flock;
One flew east and one flew west
And one flew o'er the cuckoo's nest.
One——Two——Three——Out!"

Clearer sight and understanding
Cometh with the years increase;
"One—Two—Three—and Out—" beyond this
Lies the realm of rest and peace.

Hear, O, Israel!

Hear, O, Israel, the chosen!
  Ye who hold the shibboleth!
Part the things of Cain's succession
  From the heritage of Seth.
Hear, my people! hear, my brethren!
  Listen to me as I speak;
Shun the gods of mart and Mammon;
  After these the gentiles seek.

Yours, the flowers, widely scattered;
  Theirs, the wreath of beaten gold;
Yours, the things, reborn at springtime;
  Theirs, all that which waxeth old;
All the things which anchor earthward;
  All the passing things, and weak;
Are not yours by God's intendment;
  After these the gentiles seek.

Yours, the sunrise, framed in vastness;
  Theirs, the canvas, bordered round
With the yellow pride of grovelers,
  Filched, with anguish, from the ground.

Theirs, the broad highway of shoutings;
  Yours, the still path of the meek.
Strive not for the things which echo;
  After these the gentiles seek.

Yours, the commonwealth of brethren;
  Theirs, the bent, suppliant knee;
Yours, the worship of the Father;
  Theirs, of station and degree.
Yours is not the hand of power,
  Wherewith you may vengeance wreak;
Yours is not the spoils of conflict;
  After these the gentiles seek.

Hear, O, Israel, the chosen;
  Ye who hold the shibboleth;
Part the things of Cain's succession
  From the heritage of Seth.
Hear, my people! hear, my brethren!
  Listen to me as I speak;
Shun the gods of mart and Mammon;
  After these the gentiles seek.

No Appeal

Men builded a city, rich and grand,
Far back in the morning years,
Aud the king they chose, with an iron hand,
Flung far their strong frontiers;
The trumpet's blare and the cymbal's ring
Drew from fair lands and far,
Strong men, who stood before the king
With swords and shields of war.

But the bat drove music from their halls,
And the jackal made his lair
In their streets, and slunk by the throne room walls
And sniffed at the great king's chair;
For the things which make for righteousness
Unlearned were, or forgot,
And there came in their hour of forgetfulness,
A voice which men answer not.

Again on the shores of a summer sea
Men halted and tarried long
And raised a city which long shall be
The theme of tale and song.
The learned of earth, as thitherward
They journeyed, cried: "We go
Where the pen outranks the warriors sword
And the chisel the archer's bow.
They builded, of thought, an empire wide,
And butteressed it strong with dreams;
And they named their gods of the mountainside,
Of the forest, sea and streams;
But the kingdom crumbled and rose the wail;
"Thou fair, why did you die?"
And none replied—hid was the trail,
Where the unknown God passed by.

All down the long, meandering way,
From the plains of Hindustan
To where the rear guard rests today,
Are the crumbling works of man;
Standing, like sentries marmoreal,
Marking each onward march,
On the long trail from stone to steel,
From lintel unto arch.

In fallen pillar, ruined place,
I wonder will he read
The story of his stiff necked race,
And reading, will he heed?
Will crumbling column, rising grim,
Against an eastern sky,
Be mute memorials to him,
Of the time his God passed by.

Have I Been So Long Time With You?

Have I been so long time with you and yet thou hast not known
It was I who walked the highway by your side?
Have you failed to catch my anguish in the widow's stifled moan;
Or to see me in the brother you denied?

Have you failed to see my advent, in a thousand Bethlehems,
In the mother's gaze of rapture—in the cry
Of a soul to whom the earth, with all its crowns and diadems,
Was far stranger than the stars that dot the sky?

Have the Jordan's waters waited while you sought a crumbling crown?
Do you view the sacred river from afar?
Have you failed to see the white dove in the souls which flutter down
From the heights to dark sloughs where your brethren are?

Have you blindly groped in darkness, after life and after me?
Have you missed the gold and garnered only dross?
Have you failed to feel my presence in your own Gethsemane,
Or to see me in your fellow on his cross?

Have you failed to see me walking, in the sunshine, in the storm—
Read my word among the flowers—on the hills?
I have whispered to you often when the summer winds rush warm
And my voice is in the blast that numbs and chills.

Have you failed to see me standing in a thousand Judgment halls,
While a thousand Pilates waver at the cry
Of the rabble, pressing round them, while upon their ears there falls
The brain darkened shout: "Deliver!" "Crucify!"

Have you failed to see the nail prints, in the hands and in the feet,
Of the one who walked the highway by your side?
If you have your knowledge of me is not, cannot be, complete,
And your soul is small and easy satisfied.

Have I been so long time with you and yet thou hast not known
That you served me when you served the least of these
My brethren, who are with you, and are brethren of your own,
More than when you agonized on bended knees!

I'd Like to Be a Boy Again

I'd like to be a boy again, with nothing else to do
But chunk the holes in the rail fence—the holes the pigs crawled through;
When I could watch the apple blooms, that sister said was sweet,
An' tell her they'd look better when they's big enough to eat.
When I could look upon the world complaisant as a clam;
When Dad did all the worrying, assisted some by Mam;
When, barefoot, I could feel jes like I didn't weigh an ounce.
When I could jes sail down the road an' hit the grit an' bounce.

I'd like to hunt and find the cows and drive 'em to the bars
An' set close to them an' pretend like I was countin' stars;
Then jab Boss with a stick an' see her scatter Mary Ann
An' milk around the lot, an' hear Bill Jones, the hired man,
Say: "What's a-ailin' ye, ye fool? So, Sookey! Gosh! Dod Rot!"
When Boss would make a wild sashay and carom off of Spot;
Then, barefoot, I would feel jes like I didn't weigh an ounce,
An' jes go sailin' out of there—jes hit the grit an' bounce.

I'd like to kick the dew off of the pursley by the barn,
An' get the cow-itch in my toes an' tie 'em up with yarn;
I'd like to hunt up bumblebees, an' start a scrumptious fight,

An hear Mam say, when I got home: "You shorely are a fright;"
An' have her tell Dad what I'd done, an' see him stand an' glower,
Then take me to the wood-shed for a strenuous half-hour,
An' then I'd sorter feel jes like I didn't weigh an ounce,
I'd jes jump up and down an' howl—jes hit the floor an' bounce.

I'd like to learn my sister's lamb the ways of older sheep,
An' watch him lift her feller, an' hear Sis storm an' weep;
An' have her tell me I'd humil-i-a-ted her an' spoiled her pet,
An' hear my Gran'ma say: "That boy will reach the gallus yet."
It's worth something to be a boy an' have a fine-toothed comb
Used on you every night as soon as yon from school got home;
Then shuck your shoes an' feel jes like you didn't weigh an ounce,
An' jes go sailin' down the road—jes hit the grit an' bounce.

I'd like to grab the handle of Mam's old pop-gun churn,
An' play with it from daylight till Dad called me to turn
The grindstone, while he bore on hard, to grind the mower knives;
B'jinks, the boy division is the best part of our lives.
Oh, I'd like to be a boy again, an' back to the old place,
Where I could manicure ten cows and then go out and chase
A plow that weighed a hundred tons, and then some, if an ounce—
A plow that hunted stones and roots to get a chance to bounce.

A Hobo's Reverie

This is a book; it contains no name
Save the one in print. From off the train
Some fellow threw it. I suppose he thought
That he was doing the thing he ought.
Perhaps he saw and pitied me—
The poor, bound soul, to pity the free!
Perhaps he owns broad acres, fair
And fertile; but if so gaunt care
Is part of his holdings—as for me
The world is wide and my soul is free!
He has deeper learning, no doubt, than I,
But, mayhap, he gleaned it at cost or eye;
If so he could not trade with me
His all for the eye with which I see!

This is a book; well, I will see
What sort of a messags it brings to me—
Uh, huh; the first page that I scan
Says: "Origin and End of Man."
What's either to him, or me, I say,
When neither of us own today;
Nor the present hour, nor the coming breath?
Not knowing Life, he inquires of Death!
I suppose that this is a part of the lore
That the poor slave traded his eyesight for!
If so it be, then the fact remains;
That I, not he, am the one with gains.

This is a book; in the world of dross,
Where so much depends on a copper's toss,
'Tis, doubtless, accepted philosophy

But there's more real truth in that ancient tree
And that sapling there, and the grass and vine,
And I count all these as books of mine,
I shouldn't wonder if scores of men
Were sick of soul in the toiler's den—
For den it is and their sole reward
For toiling there is—clothes and board!
I live, though my garments let in the air
And are only memories of what clothes were.

This is a book; well, I suppose,
That he and his world pity all hobos
In winter they're safe from the storm's rude shock;
Our haven is oft but a sheltering rock;
But we would not trade our scanty fare
And the wild, free life, for theirs and their care.
They have their music, dear bought and grand;
But we have the birds and the voice of the land—
The voice of the land, which they cannot hear,
Because they have dulled their inner ear
They need not pity us, nor curse,
For ours is the wealth of the universe.

This is a book; tonight when I build
My fire and my coffee can is filled
And set on the glowing coals to boil,
As a sacrifice to bootless toil,
I will offer this volume to the flame—
This thing with the round, full, sounding name—
Lest I should read and become a slave
And tremblingly go to the chattel's grave;
Like the slaves who, to things they think they own,
Have right of possession—and that alone:
A right which another more strong than they
May come tomorrow and take away.

He Would Smoke

He strove to help his fellows and he sacrificed, 'tis said;
He never kept his boquets 'till the friend he loved was dead;
He loved the little children and the aged and infirm
And did not think that all mankind were brethren to the worm;
He was honest in his dealings—he was honest when he spoke;
But the Devil surely had him, for—the reproabate would smoke.

He discharged every duty, as God gave him to see
Each duty, and he ever prayed that all men might be free;
He loved his brethren dearly—he had charity for all;
Was ever ready to help up the wavering ones who fall;
He bore life's burdens smilingly, with heart as strong as oak;
But the Devil surely had him, for—O, horrors, he would smoke!

His purse flew open when the cry of misery was heard;
He gave his substance freely, for he understood God's word.
The storm was never fierce enough, nor dark enough the night
To keep him from a friend in need, or one on whom the blight
Of circumstance had fallen, or who felt the numbing stroke
Of disaster, self-invited—but, the castaway would smoke!

What mattered if he struggled to be gentle with all men?
What mattered if, like the Jew, kept the commandments ten;
With the eleventh added? What mattered it if he
Strove to possess the spirit of the man of Galilee?
What mattered if at human woe his great heart all but broke?
Was he not a child of Satan? Certainly—for he would smoke!

The Optomist and the Liar

O, one was the Gleesome Optomist, and one was the Cheerful Liar
And the twain of them met one winter night by the side of a roaring fire;
"It warms my heart," said the Optomist, "to meet you here tonight;
For this jolly old world that carrys us all is certainly wagging right.
There isn't a thing that any one needs but what they can surely get."
And the Liar hung his hat on a peg and turned and said: "You bet!"

"It never rains too much I trow and 'tis never dry too long;
There are no thorns with the roses now and life is a blissful song;
All women are chaste; all men are true, and friends; as the flowers in May;

In fact, the children of Adam walk and act the way they pray;
Is this not true, my cheerful friend? Come now, your thoughts confess."
And the Liar smiled a sickly smile and haltingly said: "Well, yes."

At this the crane in the chimney clanged and the Devil came down the flue
And roared as he struck the hot brick hearth and stood before the two.
He glowered upon the Cheerful Liar and said: "My son, alas!
I love you well, as a father should—but, hence! you are out of your class!"
And the Optomist said: "You can't beat this fire in the place from whence you roam,"
And the Devil said: "What do you think of that? By hen, I'm going home."

The Gypsy Call

My soul goes out and travels far
Beyond the clustered stars;
And answering to its Avatar,
My life beats gainst its bars.

The gypsy call that comes adown
The sunset's shortning beam,
Finds answer; and I hate the town
And love the ways of dream.

My eyes turn from the crumbling chart,
Which marks where wisdom lies;

To greet her living counterpart,
  Traced on the midnight skies.

From mummied learning; bootless strife;
  I gladly turn today;
For symbols of the deeper life,
  Hung in the milky way.

The bauble groundlings cavil o'er
  Comes with the evening damp,
And all the unrest of the poor
  Is in the winter camp.

My hope is forest, fen and sod;
  My fear the storm and flood;
A revelation from my God
  Is in the bursting bud.

My music is the wild birds trill;
  The beat of wing on air;
The chipmunk's chirrup, from the hill;
  The voices everywhere.

My prayers are: "form me! make me free!
  Give me to understand!"
And lo, the answer to the three
  Is in my brain and hand!

Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep

I've tasted of the wine of life,
  For which men struggle so;
Some of the fierce joy, born of strife,
  It has been mine to know:

But, O, I'd trade all and be glad
For just one little hour
Within the home that once I had
When life was in its flower.
I'm weary of the mills I tread;
I want to stop and play;
I want to see my trundle bed;
I want to kneel and pray:
"Now I lay me down to sleep;
Pray the Lord my soul to keep;
Should I die before I wake,
Pray the Lord my soul to take."

Today the rabble shouts for me,
Tomorrow there may come
Another in new livery
And they'll be strangely dumb.
Then I shall know the bitterness
Of one who yields a throne
Unto another, through some stress
Of fortune, not his own.
I'm tired of fatlings, custom fed;
I'm tired of garish day;
I want to see my trundle bed;
I want to kneel and pray;
"Now I lay me down to sleep;
Pray the Lord my soul to keep;
Should I die before I wake,
Pray the Lord my soul to take."

I want to hear the sleepy dove
Croon; just beneath the eaves;
And shudder at the rustling of
The aspen's restless leaves.
I want to see the full moon swing

Through a pale, sapphire sky;
I want to hear my mother sing
An evening lullaby.
They cannot tell me she is dead;
She's just been long away—
I want to see my trundle bed,
I want to kneel and pray:
"Now I lay me down to sleep;
Pray the Lord my soul to keep.
Should I die before I wake,
Pray the Lord my soul to take."

It Is Passing

It is passing with the sunsets;
Passing, passing with the years;
Passing with the faded remnant
Of a hundred wild frontiers;
Passing with its wondrous story
All unwritten, half untold;
For its dreams of men and empire
Being into Egypt sold.

Outlawed, banished from its kingdom,
By the edict of mischance;
Going out, like campfire gleamings
Flow toward where shadows dance.
Passing with the ones who made it
Badge of honor, sign of man;
They who held by heart's tradition
To the open dealing clan.

It is passing with the round-up—
Beat of hoof and clash of horn,
In the storm, and in the darkness,
When contempt of death was born.
Passing with the prairie anthem:
With the whisper of the land
To God's silent, unscarred heaven;
To the stars that understand.

It is passing, swiftly passing,
Down the shifting ways of change;
Passing with the broader order,
Passing with the wider range.
Passing on toward the shadows,
With its losings and its gains;
Passing with its tale unwritten—
The white "Stetson" of the Plains.

Supplication

Great God! We are so ignorant;
Our knowledge is so poor;
We cling unto the Cave-Man's cage;
We shun the open door
Through which we might emerge to walk broad ways all hedged with flowers
And reach the heights where we could say: "The Universe is ours!"
Yet Heedless of our poverty
And reckless of our shame,
We scorn the unbound and the free
And blindly follow name.

Pause Thou! our minds are clouded so,
By long forgotten years,
That we are like the timid soul
Possessed of female fears;
And when we should stand in the sun, or man the battlements,
We seek the subterranean ways, or skulk within our tents,
And with our useless gold we gild
The swart,—grain-furrowed face;
And call it "progress" when we build
A larger market place.

Have pity Father! we are weak;
Our hard-yoked necks are sore;
We bear the burden of each one
We lived and thought before;
And wheresoever he was crude; in that in which he failed,
Or stumbled, it is unto us, in cumbered fee, entailed,
Then judge us only by intent
And where our sin we blend
With righteousness, which Thou hast lent,
Look Thou unto the end!

Ball on the Vacant Lot

There's crow tracks gathering 'round my eyes and silver in my hair;
I do not need a lexicon to know what's meant by care;
Sometimes when a hot day has brought an added dash of gall
I wonder if the game is worth the candle, after all;
But when I'm home of evenings and the world is half forgot

And the boys are playing town ball, down upon the vacant lot,
I loose my grip on things mature and dream I am a boy
And I know the gray worlds treasury still holds the same old joy—
The weight of years lifts and moves on whene'er I hear them shout:
"Aw, Skinny, give the willow up! You great, big slob, you're out!"

The brooks do not appear as wide as once they seemed to be,
Nor murmur half so sweetly on their journey to the sea,
I miss the chipmunk's chirrup from the old log on the hill,
I've lost the lark and oriole; I've found the whip-poor-will;
I cannot see the colors in the sunset and the dawn
That once I used to see there and I wonder where they've gone;
I know my hearing has been dulled by life's commercial din
And my eyes; they have been blinded by the books I've burrowed in—
Know it? Of course I know it, when a boyish voice rings clear:
"Hey! Mugsy! Hey, you duffer! Aw, wake up an' put 'er here!"

A panorama of the days which cannot be forgot,
Comes, like rare gleams from Paradise, across that vacant lot,
And O, 'tis worth the price it costs, e'en though it break a chain
Of thought, which were it left to form, would split the world in twain,
And thongh I loose what paltry wealth it may be mine to claim,

Although my death may find the world in ignorance of my name,
I will account it fortune, fame, and everlasting joy,
If I retain a remnant of the free heart of a boy—
If I can feel the willow bend, when the last ball shall come
Across the plate, and hear a cry: "Nobody there! Come Home!"

Heart Songs

Heart songs; although a peasants lay,
Compel the souls of kings,
And speed the gray earth on its way
Toward eternal things.

Heart songs; aye, heart songs will remain
Handmaidens of the soul
When all else tangible entrain
With heaven's closing scroll.

Heart songs; although we mock the air
And flount the halting rhyme;
Yet God is with them everywhere—
Behind them all the time.

Heart songs; O sing them, son of mine,
While youth is in the veins;
Before the red leaf decks the vine:
Before the autumn rains.

Songs sweeter than all flowers that blow
Heart songs, not songs of brow—
I could have sung them long ago;
I cannot sing them now.

Heart songs—yet like a rain fed stream
They riot in my breast;
But voice is down the ways of dream;
Ways centering in the west.

When I am through with bloom and blight
And with the toys of men
And bathed in some celestial light,
I know I'll sing them then.

Visitation

I am come from the tents of the languorous breeze,
To a camp far in from shore;
From a star marked course, through trackless seas,
To the path to the threshing floor.

From the tawny tribes where the day awakes;
Where they curse the traders sail;
From the swish of the sea against the strakes,
To the swirl of the landsman's flail.

From the speech of the shrouds, in the morning gray,
To the witless call of the cock;
From the poppy isles, perfumed alway,
To the reek of the merchant dock.

I am come from the shoals of shifting sand;
From the mist of the fisher's bank;
To the foul fog anchored against the land;
The fog of caste and rank!

From the strong ropes clutched in the mast-head block,
Clewed fast, or running free;
To a sapless vine, of ancient stock,
Hung loose on a leafless tree.

I am come from a waste where green meets blue
And dreams travail in birth;
From a thousand coral islands to
The heart of an isle of earth.

Castles in Spain

You may scoff at the dream, as the sordid scoff,
The sordid who worship gain,
But behind all things are the forms far off
That people the Castles in Spain.

There be those who cling, face down, to the earth
And never know the pain,
Of they who bring into glorious birth
The forms in the Castles in Spain.

When the passing earth has claimed its due;
You will find that none remain
As retainers, save those sent by you,
To the misty Castles in Spain.

There are tainted things on the old world's breast,
But there be never a stain
On the wealth that lies in the treasure chest
Of the dream builded Castles in Spain.

O, brother of mine! I tell you this;
That the world is led by brain,
And ruled, in the last analysis,
By the forms in the Castles in Spain.

No matter who may be kings today;
Their's is but a limited reign;
The Princes who hold an eternal sway
Are in the dream Castles in Spain.

Revised Version

One day when Fathuh Adam
  Wuh cuttin de sweet dock
Outen de clober medder
  Ole Satan tooked er walk
Up to the Eden gahdun,
  An he say: "Well, I b'leeve
I'll santer in dis mo'nin
  An call on Missus Eve."

Den Satan fix he colluh
  An pat he white cravat
An take he red bandanner
  An smoof he tall silk hat
An den he put he hat on
  De back part ob he haid
An say: "I shorely reckons
  I'll kill dat ooman daid!"

Den Satan take some mint out
  An chew, an den he spy
Mis' Eve on de veranduh
  An he sorter shet he eye
An walk right peart up to huh
  An interjuce hisseff,
An Eve jess stan a-starin,
  An sorter catch her breff.

Den Satan bow he fines'
  An say: "How is youh chile;
Is youh mammy home dis mo'nin?"
  An Missus Eve she smile

An say: "O, Mistuh Satan,
You's flatterin me I feah;
But ain' it er nice mo'nin;
Step in an take er cheer."

Den Satan dus' he shoes off
An step inside de do'h
An say: "Youh place am lubly
I orter called befo'h."
Den Eve bring some refreshmen's
An Satan praise huh pie
An Missus Eve ac' proudlike
An Satan wink he sye.

Den Satan say: "Dem apples
I sees down by de gate
Am mighty likely pippins,
But I reckons dey am late.
I bets dat wif dem apples
Youh sure could mak some pies
Dat would temp' er shinin angel
To run away frum Paradise!"

Den Eve say: "Well, I flatters
Mysef Ise er good cook;
An I didn' learn it neider
Frum no mammy ner no book.
But den my ole man, Adam,
He been a-tellin me
Dat in de lease de lan'lord
Hab done resarve dat tree."

Den Satan say: "Deah lady,
Ise er lawyer an de Cote
Jess renduhed er decision
On er promissory note,

An it hol's, by way er dictum,
  Dat sich clauses in er lease
Am void, an in violation
  Ob de State's powuh ob police."

"Derefoah I can suah inform youh
  Dat youh am intirely free,
To go out an pick dem apples
  Offen dat ole pippin tree.
An suahly, gentle lady,
  Ef I could cook like youh
I'd make some pies out ob em;
  Dats zackly whut I'd do."

Den Satan draw he gloves on
  An take he hat an cane
An say: "Mis' Eve I shorely
  Likes the way youh entertain;
An I thanks youh mighty kindly
  Foah er pleasant aftuhnoon."
Den he santer down de garhdun
  Er whistlin ob er chune.

Den Eve she take huh dishpan
  An go an climb dat tree
An fill dat pan wif apples
  As fine as fine could be;
An take dem to de kitchen
  An set dem on er shef.
An when Adam comed to suppuh
  She tell him: "Hep youhseff."

An Adam—well, he ate some,
  An den er angel came
A-walkin in de garhden
  An callin' Adam's name;

An Adam skeered to ansuh
Jess den, but by-um-by
He did—an Ise proud ob him,
Foah Adam didn' lie.

Daddy's Pilot

Ise been musin', ob my chil'ens; how dey's lef me one by one;
To mak' home nes's foah dey own sefs; heah a daughter; dah a son;
How de pirate yeahs hab stole dem, as dey by mah doah-way crep',
Twell de li'l' angel daughter am de only one Ise kep'.
I min' how I faulted Mastuh when de Shadder Vale she cross;
But de ones I tho't Ise keepin' am de only ones I los'.

She come to us in de spring time when de roses wah in bloom
An de air full ob bird music an' jes loaded wif perfume;
Was'n a mite like de odders; did'n' fuss ner did'n' cry;
Why, jes lots ob times Ise ketched huh standin' smilin' at de sky;
An' I could'n unduhstan' huh from de minute dat she come,
Foah she seemed jes like some angel dat had wanduhed way from home.

She would listen to de birdies an den come to me an say;
"Daddy, deah, dey's talkin to me in dey funny kin' ob way."
Den she'd lissen to de crickets an den tell me what dey said,
An I'd tell huh she had crinkles in huh lil' kinky haid;

An she'd laugh and say: "O, daddy, doan go makin' fun ob
me;
Foah I knows whut dey's a-sayin; it's as plain as plain can
be."

But de blessed, gentle Mastuh ob de gahdun ober dere,
Wanted huh, an' so he took her, foah to mak his gahdun
fair;
An mah heart growed hard an' stony at His heaviness ob
han'
An I stumbled in mah duty, foah I couldn' understan';
An I got to doubtin heabin, an' de earrf, bofe sides de
Cross,
Twell she come an whispuh: "Daddy, I ain gwine away, nor
los."

Since den often in de ebenin' she come trippin down de
gloam
An whispuh to me: "Daddy, Ise a-pilotin' youh home."
An' often in de mo'nin' she come glidin froo de mist
An' mah heart git strong an' powuhful as mah withur'd
cheek am kissed—
De whole big worl' kaint tell me dat she sleepin' in huh
grave;
Kaint I see huh? Doan I heah huh whisperin; "Daddy,
deah, be brave?"

An so I ain' a-pinin' nor a-honin' any moah
Foah I know she growin' lubly on dat bright, sunshiny
sho';
An' I would'n' mah huh pleasuh by er gittin glum an sad,
Foah she come to he'p huh daddy, when he need huh
mighty bad;
An' she lif' me neaher heabin ebery single time she come;
Wif huh whisperin' to me: "Daddy, Ise a-pilotin' youh
home."

Jess A-Honin' Aftuh Youh

Ise setin' heah, dress'd in mah bes',
An de long week's wuk am thro';
Ise restin', lak I used to res',
An, mah honey, Ise a-honin' aftuh youh.

De ban' am playin' in de park,
Jess lak it used to do;
De stars come a-twinklin' thro' de dark,
An Ise jess a-honin' aftuh youh.

Dat Cleopatria—Ann—Marie
An dat sassy Nanny Loo;
Been makin' deir sheep's eyes at me;
But I done kep a-honin' aftuh youh.

I walked to church de odder night—
Walked right between dem two;
It wah dark an I had to hol' dem tight,
But I done kep a-honin' aftuh youh.

I wah up putty late wif widder Smif'
She got tellin' whut she do
If er comet hit dis earf ker-biff,
But I jess kep' a-honin' aftuh youh.

When I lef' de Pahson's t'odder night,
I kissed his daughter, Sue,—
Jess had to do hit, ter be polite,
But I jess kep a-honin' aftuh youh.

Youh cousin accused me ob lookin' glum,
An youh sistuh said Ise blue—
Dey's bofe mighty nervous, an I nussed em some
But I jess kep a-honin' aftuh youh.

Youh Mammy's well an' so is youh Pap;
An' de res'; dey's all well too—
Ise hol'in youh bes' fren' on mah lap
An, honey, jess a-honin' aftuh youh.

Dis bein' bergaged am nice youh see
An I knows whut youh'll do;
You'll come home an make it pleasant foah me,
Caze Ise jess kep a-honin' aftuh youh.

But doan youh go to hurrin' home,
Foah I can worry through
Lak Ise been a doin'; but twell youh come
I'll jess keep a-honin aftuh youh.

Poppies

I planted some blood-red poppies,
When the buds were bursting forth,
In the days of pregnant nature,
When the sun was drifting north;
I planted them by the doorstep
And watched them sprout and grow
And they whispered a strange, wild story
That only the poppies know.

I whispered to them each evening
And each returning dawn
They called me forth from dreamland
'Till the summer was past and gone;
And after the frosts of autumn
Had passed, with their red and gold,
Their lotus fragrance lingered,
Like the race of a tale that's told.

One morning I opened my casement
And flung the shutters wide
And a bright faced, radiant angel,
Stood where the poppies died;
And he said; "I have watched, unnoticed,
Since a forgotten day,"
But the poppies story lingered
And the angel went away.

I watched his wondrous passing,
With no wild throb in my breast,
Down the astral way of silence
To the stillness of the west---
Beyond the way and the silence,
Some place, where I shall be free,
The bright, red poppies are blooming
And whispering and waiting for me.

A Few Patent Facts

Todder day I hearn a felluh
Say dere wasn' any Gaud,
Charvin stone up in de mountins
An dat Moses wah er fraud.
But I reckons dem commandments
Dat ole Moses toted bac'
To de chill'ns in de valley,
Am a hahd an stubbohn fac'.
Seems ter me de way he got 'em,
Or de monf' an day and yeah,
Doan make sech a sight ob diffuns
Jess so long as dey am heah.

Den he sayed man evoluted
F'm er lil' chunk ob gum—
Ef he did Ise bettin money,
He's bin evolutin some!—
But dat miracle ob Adam
Doan strech mah b'leif as fur
As de thousan lil' odders
Whut dis felluh sayed occur—
Ise not honein' foah somebody
To come roun' an make hit cleah
How we gets heah, foah hits sho'ly
Mighty certain we am heah.

Den he sayed dat Faro's ah'my
Wasn' drownded in de sea;
But Ah'd lak ter know whut dat has
Gotter do wif him er me.
I doan reckon Mastuh'll ax us
Much about dat happenin,'
But He's apt to question clos'ly
Whut we am an whut we's bin.—
Spose hit did or did'n' happen
Hit doan hep us now er mite—
Nevuh was intended to hep
No one but de Israelite.

Den he sayed dem Hebrew chill'ens
Nevuh wah in any fiah,
An he spressed himsef' as certain
Dat ole Jonah wah er liah.
Sposin he am right erbout hit,
Dat woan sorter hep him thro'
Whin Ole Mastuh say: "Look heah, suh,
Ise been heahin erbout youh!"

Seems ter me he's chasin shadders—
Dats bout all he's evuh done—
Doan he know dere ain' no shadders
On de side to'ahds de sun!

Lucille

[To my little daughter, Lucille, on her fifth birthday, August 26, 1903.]

Standing yet within the shadows
Of the portals of the day,
Gazing out o'er youth's rose meadows
To'ard the vague and far away.—Refrain:

Little girl, my own, my sweetheart;
O, Lucille, Lucille, Lucille;
At thy feet, O radiant princess
Let me kneel, O let me kneel.

With the morning spell's assistance
Kissing rosy finger tips
To the wan shapes in the distance;
Wondering with half parted lips.—Refrain:

This I wish you, little maiden;
May the stars so move above
That you'll reach the sunset laden
With the chiefest sheaves of love.—Refrain:

May bright angel bands convoy you,
As you sail a jasper sea;
May nor storm or cloud annoy you;
May life's voyage tranquil be.—Refrain:

May you look not, save in pity,
On the towers and minarets,
Of that dark and gloomy city,
In the land of vain regrets.—Refrain;

Georgia Lullaby

De mammy angel lighted huh can'l's in de sky,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam';
She'll done come aroun' wif huh snuffers, by-um-by,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',
De crickerdee am singin' his, "cheep, cheep, cheep,"
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',
De bull frog am a-mumblin, "knee-deep, knee-deep."
Sleep, mah lil' white lam'.—Refrain:

Sl-e-e-e-e-p m-mah honey, sl-e-e-e-e-p m-mah baby;
Sl-e-e-e-e-p mah honey, twell de day;
Sl-e-e-e-e-p m-mah honey; sl-e-e-e-e-p m-mah baby,
Mammy'll keep the skeers away.

De hants and de hoots gotter stay away from youh,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',
Dey's nothin' gwinter take youh, else it take mammy too,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',
Mammy gwineter watch by de one she love de bes',
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',
She know he mighty ti'ad an' he need er good res',
Sleep, mah lil' white lam'.—Refrain:

De lam's quit deir playin' and dey's got mighty still,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',
Dey's sleepin by deir mammys on de moonshiny hill,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',
Lil' bird got he haid tuckered unner lil' wing,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',
A-waitin' foah de mornin' man to tell um, "wake an' sing!"
Sleep, mah lil' white lam'.—Refrain:

O, de mammy angel lighted huh can'l's in de sky,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',
Spect dere'll be a lettuh shinin' in um by-um-by,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam';
Nice lil' lettuh foah mammy's lil' boy,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',
Tellin' whah he done los' he top an' he toy,
Sleep, mah lil' white lam',—Refrain:

To an Absent One

It is marah, marah, sweetheart; never, never, as of yore,
Will I take you in my arms and whisper, peace;
Fanes are shattered, idols fallen, and with heavy heart and sore
I am waiting, all impatience, for release.

Oh, blessed, blessed memories—like a dream of Paradise;
Oh, lotus laden moments of the past;
Oh, 'tis hard to weigh love's anchor in the bay of laughing eyes,
Knowing that no more therein it will be cast.

Where the Southern Cross is brightest, in a sunny far-off land,
In a lonely wanderer's camp beside the stream,
I will seem to feel the strokings of my absent baby's hand,
Of a face and form I cherished I will dream.

When the many colored songster wakes the woodland with his call
And the mist comes rolling upward from the sea,
I will calm my troubled spirit and will pray the God of all
That some day I may reach Paradise and Thee.

The Songs of Erin

Let me sing the songs of Erin; they are music to my soul;
With their touch of human pathos and the lilt within their troll.
Unto me these are the grandest; I for them a reverance own;
For they draw me nearer heaven; nearer to the Great White Throne.

Let me sing the songs of Erin; in them lurk a subtile power,
Which can broaden narrow defiles; lighten up the darkest hour;
Make a garden of the desert; lift the soul and bear it far
Up along the astral highway running past the polar star.

Let me sing the songs of Erin; songs of noble life a part;
Life which glows, and gleams and glistens only in an Irish heart;
They have power to sway me, soothe me, while an alien ministrel's lay
Rouses in me all the latent impulse of the beast of prey.

Let me sing the songs of Erin; with their tenderness and tears,
And their strong, clear notes of patience, sounding down thro all the years;
With them comes the rest of sunset and the promise of the dawn;
With them all the ages harvests augur well for farther on.

Let me sing the songs of Erin; when the threatening clouds hang low;
Let me sing them in the southland, where the balmiest breezes blow;

Let me sing them eastward, westward, northward; all have of them need,
For they are as universal as the ancient Keltic creed.

Let me sing the songs of Erin; they are mine to have and hold;
Clear notes of eternal victory are within their measures rolled.
With them I can meet all futures, sturdily and unafraid;
With them rest beneath the bay trees, when the ghosts of Time are laid.

Sleep On, Beloved

Sleep on, beloved; I know not to what country far my footsteps tend,
Now what deep, turbid waters roll between me and the journey's end,
For you, beloved, the weary march is over now for aye and aye;
For me remains the sentry's beat, the jungle path, the weary day.
But take this token to confirm the word and sign of weeping eyes,
Enswathe the knowledge, and believe I would not have it otherwise.

Sleep on, beloved, the devious ways allotted must be threaded through;
My feet are laggards, but my heart, like some fleet bird, flies on to you
Hope might revive, might bud, might bloom, but ah; I would not have it so;

This Dead Sea fruit is sweet to me, and why, beloved, I
do not know.
There are strange dreams, wild dreams and acts in the
great ledger of our years,
But strangest of them all is why we cling to heart-aches
and to tears.

Sleep on, beloved, 'tis better that the darker, coarser clay
remain;
To march with progress through the storm and bitter chill
of autumn rain;
To in the midnight watch awake, to sleep and dream of
might-have-been,
Beloved, our souls are formed by those we touch among
our fellowmen.
Then let me touch through darksome days, when from
this mist to fairer skies,
My star moves on, I'll greet you, love, within the groves of
Paradise.

Nothing Can Matter Now

I have followed adown the valley ways,
The will-o'-the-wisp of fame,
And toiled on the hills, through tiresome days,
In the pride of my father's name;
I have ridden through blood-red mist of strife
For the praise of the low hung brow,
And called this valets breathing, "Life"—
But nothing can matter now.

I have feared, as the cringing slave must fear,
And scoffed as the mockers scoff;
I have hushed the music that sounded near
To list to a strain far off;
I have fought and smiled when the skies were brass,
So that I might endow—
But they dug her a grave in the whispering grass
And nothing can matter now.

I have watched in the chill of an autumn rain,
A summer march and wheel,
In a land where the dead past answers pain
As iron answers steel;
I have raised a shrine for the sons of men
And marvelled to see them bow
And call it a thing beyond their ken—
But nothing can matter now.

I have walked the earth with a radiant band,
And crawled with the underside,
And pitched my tent in a ghost-filled land
Where the dawn and night divide;
I have chafed at the thought of the paltry wage
That the uncrowned kings allow
To the one who toils in this present age—
But nothing can matter now.

I have loved—and the love of the angel'swere crime
Beside it—but tempting fate
I laid it aside to dwell for a time
In the tents of the Tribe of Hate;
I have sworn with Regulus overhead
And at noon have payed my vow—
But they took her out where they take the dead
And nothing can matter now.

Katie Barry

O, the odor of the dillisk,
  With a glimpse of hills of green,
Often come to me at twilight,
  Though an ocean rolls between;
Aye, no evening ever deepens
  But there comes a voice to me,
From a past, too near to heaven,
  In the valley of the Lee.

Misty memories; dusky pictures;
  Hill, and dale, and riverside,
Bordered by the dread that entered
  On the night the banshee cried—
Through the stretch of years and seasons,
  Miles of land and leagues of sea,
I've remembered you, my Katie.
  And the valley of the Lee.

You cannot return unto me,
  Though my heart keeps calling through
Each returning dawn and sunset;
  It is I who go to you;
When I've stood the watch appointed
  And Time's shackles fall from me,
I will meet you, Katie Barry;
  In the valley of the Lee.

Despite all the fears of childhood
  And the creed of riper age,
Despite all the learned abstractions
  Of the prophet, seer or sage.

I am clinging to the augur
When you smiled and said to me:
"Meet me, Larry, I'll be waitin'
In the valley of the Lee."

Time I'm marking—only marking—
O, I'm longing, mavourneen,
For that other Golden Valley
And a walk with you, colleen—
Aye, God rest you, Katie Barry,
Sleeping 'till Eternity,
In the blessed land of Erin,
In the valley of the Lee.

Wondering

'Tis long years since she left me, yet the sorrow is as keen
As when that far, gray morning found me questioning between
The quick world and the sepulchre, soul stricken at my loss,
And counting all the gifts of earth, and heaven's promise, dross.

And O, the bitter, barren years! Earth's shoutings, earth's acclaim;
The glitter of it's pageantry; the fever of it's fame;
It's myriad, idle opiates, in which the clod believes,
Alike are empty, valueless, dead, windblown autumn leaves.

And O, I wonder, wonder, at low twelve, amid the hush;
When God's stars speak His language, putting words of men to blush;
I wonder when the Dipper sinks and pearl gray blends with blue;
If, when I meet her, she will be the little girl I knew.

I wonder ere the dew is gone, and in the noonday's heat.
If when my ears are ope'd to hear the tinkling of her feet
Upon the tesselated pave, if it will, as of yore,
Be sound of girlish footfalls, or a music more mature.

I wonder, were my eyes unveiled, if I could see her now,
And if it is her hand that rests so often on my brow,
And when I reach the sunset camp and shadows grow more deep,
I wonder will she take my hand and lull me into sleep.

But when the biouvac's over and reveille calls me forth
To march in God's eternity, where east and west and north
And south are things forgotten, as all limits then shall be,
I know that she will meet me and that both will then be free.

Honey, Mine

Honey, deah, Ise waitin', wukin',
Doin' jess mah lebbel bes',
Cordin' to mah lights an' lettin'
Gaud Ermighty do de res';
An' I reckons ef I sorter
Happen to hew from de line,
In de fullness ob his mercy
He'll luk to hit, honey, mine.

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Sorter take he mighty broad-ax
An' jess shave hit staight an' true,
So's de wuk woan mar de buildin'
In youh lan' Ise comin' to;
Dere, I reckons, we'll be libbin
In er mansion mighty fine—
Youh an' me an' all de odders
Dat wese lubbed heah, honey, mine.

Preacher sometimes faults me mighty,
An some odders tell me fac's—
Aftuh dey has happened, honey,
But I kaint grow in deir trac's;
Some kin wuk in oak an' warnut,
Some hab gotter hab sof' pine,
An' Ole Mastuh knows he business
Better'n we does, honey, mine.

I knows now why Ise lef' waitin',
Dough I didn' ustuh know,
Mastuh saw Ise mighty lil'
So he gif me chanct to grow;
An' heah in dis lil' cabin,
Wif de mo'nin glo'y vine
Climbin' round de doah, Ise growin'
To youh bigness, honey, mine.

So Ise jess a-waitin', wukin',
Doin' jess de bes' I can,
Tryin' to mak mysef' ovuh
In de tallness ob er man;
An' when I has done hit, honey,
Yonduh, whah de day stahs shine,
In de nevuh fadin' gahduns,
I'll be wif youh, honey, mine.

The Soul of the Artist

His hands were scarred by the tools of toil,
And his brow was furrowed by care;
And his step was halt and his frame was bent,
But the soul of the artist was there.

When the sun came out of the far, gray east,
It found him doing his best,
And true to his task, when it shut the door
Of its chamber in the west.

No flaring lines in a burdened press,
Invested him with renown;
No record, on earth, of his deeds was kept;
But the angels wrote them down.

The world passed by, with a scornful smile,
And assigned him low estate;
But God looked down on the work he did
And reckoned him with the Great.

And whether it was the hush-ah-hush,
Of the scythe, or the evening prayer
That mounted tremblingly, haltingly up,
The soul of the artist was there.

One day he dropped, with his harness on,
And one of God's golden cars
Stopped under the arch of the astral way,
Swung down from the farthest stars.

And a herald cried, to the franchised soul;
"I may not return alone;
I bear the souls of your brotherhood
To where they may claim their own."

Mister Chicken, Please Roost High

There's a camp meeting running at Rocky Ford
And the preacher likes chicken pie;
But Ise made up my mind to serve the Lord,
If the chickens will just roost high.
Ise been a powerful sinner man
And a mansion in the sky
I wants to get, and I think I can,
If the chickens will just roost high.—Chorus:

Mister Chicken, p-l-e-a-s-e roost high!
Mister Chicken, p-l-e-a-s-e roost high!
You am gwine to loose me a harp and a crown,
Mister Chicken, if you don't roost high.

I listens to the words that's said,
I hears the sinners cry;
But these words, all the time, keep a-runnin thro my head:
"Mister Chicken, wont you please roost high?"
I likes you baked, or boiled, or stewed,
I likes you in a fry;
But old Satan's done had me interviewed
And I wants you to please roost high.—Chorus:

I can keep from fighting, deed I can,
When some one kicks my dog;
I can keep from swearing, like a pirate man,
When I tries to pen a hog;
I can keep away from the old corn juice,
I can cut out the rye;
But as sure as shooting it'll be no use
If the chickens don't roost high.—Chorus:

I aint skeered of the dark, nor ghosts of the dead,
For I can whistle a chune;
But I has to go by Johnson's shed
And this am the dark of the moon!
And Johnson's yaller legged hens
Are a-most too fat to fly;
I sees the finish of a gentlemens,
Mister Chicken, if you don't roost high.—Chorus:

Mistah Johnsing Done Got He Chicken House Locked

Ise got to eat co'n bread for a while, wif bacon on de side,
An' its goin' to go right bad wif me, aftah havin chicken, fried;
It's goin' to go most powerful hard, but I hopes to change it soon;
Foah deres some nights a' comin' now when dere wont be no moon.
Ise visited Mistuh Johnsing's house wif ma gum, shoes an' ma sack;
But Johnsing done insulted me an' I aint a-gwine back.

Foah—Mistuh Johnsing done got he chicken house locked;
He done put a fas'en on de doah;
Got a big bull dog to snoop around,
An' I aint goin' back no moah;
Ise fond ob chicken, but dat dog aint gwine to get no chance,
To chase me ober de back yard fence an' ruin dese Sunday pants.

I'd like to know what de white folks mean, wif deir suspcious ways,
A-buyin' dogs dat set up night an' do deir sleepin' days;
Now look at Mistuh Johnsing's dog—I tell you it's de truth—
He acts like he been crossed in love, back somewhar in he youth;
I conld unlock dat hen house doah an' I wouldn't be no hog,
But dey aint no key in dis wide world dat would unlock dat dog.—Foah, Etc:

Ise goin' to burn mah rabbit foot an' move way from dis town,
An' go someplace whar folks doan try to keep de black man down;
Dese white folks am a scrumptious set, dey do jest as dey please,
Next thing youh know dey'll learn deir hens to roost up in de trees;
Dey'll miss me long bout whitewash time, but Ise suah gwine to go,
Someplace whah dey doan keep cranky dogs an' locks on de henhouse doah. Foah, Etc:

Morning Glories

Mo'nin' glo'ies, mo'nin' glo'ies, O, deys res'ful to de eyes;
An' Ah wonduhs am dey growin' in the fiel's ob Pahadise.
In dem fiel's hits allus mo'nin' an' dey aint' no noonday heat;

Nor no deep dus' in de highway, foah to sco'tch ouh tiahed feet.
Deed Ah hopes deys growin' yonduh, dough Ah shuahly will be swo'n
Dat dey hol's a lot ob backache, when deys growin in de co'n.

Shuah Ah likes to see em growin', an a-twinin' roun' de briahs;
Wif jess heah an' deah red blossoms, like er lot ob little fiahs,
An' a-reachin' foah de beech lim's, in deir girly sort ob way,
An' a-closin' up dey posies in de middle ob de day.
O, deys scrumptious in de ebenin' and deys beautious in de mo'n;
But deys got er lot ob backache, when deys growin' in de co'n.

Ah knows some folks calls em cusses, an' looks on em as er blight;
But Old Mastuh he done made em an' Ise bettin' deys all right;
An' we coulden' foad to loose em, any moah dan loose de sun,
Foah Old Mastuh ain' a-wukin' an' a makin' things foah fun.
Dat deys heah am proof deys needed—mighty good proof, shuahs youh bo'n—
Dough dey does hol' lots ob backache, when deys growin' in de co'n.

An' sometimes when Ise a-restin' in de shade erlong de creek,
All dey posies seem so human, dat Ah halfway heahs em speak;

Foah dey pears jess lak de people; red an' brown, an' white an' blue,
Black an' purple, streaked an' speckled, an' some shot wif yaller, too.
Some looks mighty fresh an' sassy; some looks droopin', old an' wo'n;
But dey all has de same backache, when deys growin' in de co'n.

Mo'nin glo'ies, mo'nin glo'ies, let em nod an' let em grow,
An' Ah'll stan' all ob deir backache, foah Old Mastuh made em so.
An' Ah'll wait to know de reason why deys growin' neaf dese skies
Twell Ah meets de Mastuh Gahd'ner, in de fiel's ob Pahadise.
Tain foah me to fuss about em, nor to heap on dem mah sco'n,
Dough dey does hol' lots of backache, when deys growin' in de co'n.

Again

I've seen again, this summer day,
The bright sidereal gleams
That shimmer down the astral way
From the far land of dreams.

Once more I've heard a voice today
And felt a presence near,
And knelt as I've not knelt to pray,
Since a forgotten year.

And I have wondered if my sin
  Has caused the far land's gate
To swing forever in and in
  Or whether it be Fate.

What deed of despite have I done
  Unto Eternity,
That of its myriad voices one,
  One only, comes to me?

Yet could I know she holds the gate,
  From whence the far gleams come,
I would be thrice content to wait
  For light till I get home.

The voice that comes, could I but know
  'Twere hers I would be filled
With satisfaction deep, although
  All other sounds were stilled.

The Wind That Shakes the Barley

God bless the hills of Donegal,
  God bless the Tyrone meadows,
So full iv tinder memories,
  Iv poethry an' shadows;
God bless th' hivinly days of youth,
  Whin me an' Maggie Farley
Led all the lads an' lasses to;
  "The Wind That Shakes the Barley.

Me kin and Oi, St. Patrick's day,
  Wore green, an' good an' mellow

We got; while her's another day,
  Paraded in th' yellow--
Whut matter if yez grandsire fought
  Wid Cromwell or Prince Charley?
'Tis all forgot whin thrippin' to
  "The Wind That Shakes the Barley."

Whin love wanst spakes unto yez heart,
  His voice ye will be heedin';
He knows not iv the jealousies
  Iv creed, or race, or breedin'!—
Whut cared Oi for the gauger's trade
  Pursued be Dinnis Farley,
Droonken wid wine iv Maggie's eyes,
  An' "Wind That Shakes the Barley?"

Whut cared Oi if her brother, Moike,
  Iv Coast Guards wor th' Colonel?
Whut cared Oi if her whole male kin
  Wor fit for fires infernal?
Whut cared Oi if the Divvil's name
  Wor Moike, or Dinnis, Farley?
Houldin' her hand an' thrippin' to
  "The Wind That Shakes the Barley."

Whut cared she if th' Doughertys
  Wor smugglin' mooch or any,
Or if they droonk the mountain dew
  Thot paid no king a penny?
For her there wor no Dougherty,
  For me there wor no Farley—
'Twas Terrince an' his Maggie, an'
  "The Wind That Shakes the Barley."

Good luck has followed on the day
  Oi down in Antrim waited,

Whoile Cousin Finnin iv Tyrone,
  Kept all th' Coast Guards baited
Along th' Londonderry shore,
  Whoile Oi an' Maggie Farley
Wor married, whoile th' poiper played
  "The Wind That Shakes the Barley."

Now; whin me conduck's not th' best,
  An' she says: "May th' Divvil
Fly 'way wid yez, an' kape yez, too,
  Ye taisin' imp iv aivil";
Oi take th' coorse all married min
  Should take, an' do not parley,
But smile on her, an whustle low
  "The Wind that Shakes the Barley."

Thin, wid th' ould loight in her eyes,
  She says: "God bless ye, Terrince,
Although sometimes ye vex me sowl,
  Almost beyant forbearance;
But over all, ye are th' Prince
  Thot wanst won Maggie Farley,"
An' thin we trip a measure iv
  "The Wind That Shakes the Barley."

Incomplete

This life we live is so incomplete;
So incomplete; so incomplete;
Its misty visions so passing sweet,
  Its joys so quickly flown;

That out in the deathless realms of space,
Must be a place,
Where face to face,
Beneath the star of desert or grace,
We'll know as we are known.

Somewhere, someplace, is recompense,
Is recompense, is recompense;
Where the fearsome child or halting sense
No longer fears the rod;
Where the mystic chords that elude us here
To a wakened ear,
So sweet and clear,
Will bring the anodyne of fear,
From the chloral halls of God.

Whe wander-lust of our feet, my dear,
Our feet, my dear; our feet, my dear;
Is earnest that we are but aliens here,
That life is still ahead,
Somewhere—no matter what they say,
Not far away,
In endless day,
We'll meet, where flowers bloom alway,
The dead who are not dead.

Some place, where skies are deeper blue,
Are deeper blue, are deeper blue;
The dreams we dream will all come true,
Hope cease to barren be.
Someday the chains that chafe and gall,
And bind us all,
That fright the small,
From our enfranchised souls will fall—
Someday we shall be free.

Lucy's House

One day in spring a messenger
  Beside the fresh-turned furrow stood
And said: "I bid you go to her
  Who met death in her maidenhood;
O, hasten, lest you come too late,
  Divorce the furrow, cap and blouse;
Henceforth the cowl; grim stallions wait
  Before the door of Lucy's house."

Last night a presence stood within
  My room and said to me: "Forsooth,
I've searched your life for sign of sin
  But only found the bind of youth;
You've looked upon your soul as dark
  And shrank from that you would espouse;
'Twill different be when standing stark
  Before the gate of Lucy's house."

"The nearer, life be naked new,
  The quicker will it bell and book
And candle bring, and question, too;
  'What curse goes with these things I took?
What vain form must I mumble through,
  Effective trembling souls to touse?—
But there be nothing naked new,
  Within the walls of Lucy's house."

My weary feet go up and down
  O'er wind-swept hill, through boggy vale;
By countryside and in the town
  I hear the gossips idle tale;

Of lovers lingering at the bars,
  Of candles burned by anxious spouse,
But no one dreams the steady stars
  Are tapers tall in Lucy's house.

Gone On

Gone on to sing an unknown song,
  To lisp in an unknown tongue,
In an unknown land, where skies are fair;
  Where vespers never are rung.

Gone on, across the mystic stream
  Where hope faints, at whose brink
The man immortal rises where
  The mortal stooped to drink.

Gone on, to say: "I know, I know,"
  Where we may only hope;
To walk, bright-eyed, in lustrous light,
  Where we may only grope,

Gone on, to learn what we may not,
  While sealed unto the earth;
To know that life and death are but
  A process of our birth.

By the name I knew and loved her here
  I may not know her there,
But I'll know the touch of baby hands,
  In Heaven—or anywhere.

Lazarus

["But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that thou, in thy life time, receivedest thy good things, and likewise, Lazarus evil things.—"]

Between the walls of measured time, in God's Eternity,
No prophet yet has spoken, save of things which he could see;
No dreamer ever dreamed a dream but what there lay behind
Some fact, or some formed future threw the shadow on his mind.

And so the wondrous vision of the Christ of Galilee
Finds substance in the history of a race both bond and free;
A race that for the guardian's wage have passed beneath the rod;
But God is with the Celt because the Celt is near to God.

Content with tawdry furnishings, self-centered in their pride,
The heirs of Time have stood aloof from him who walked outside
The mud daubed wall of custom, with its man-wrought, caste-bound gate,
That marks a line between mankind where God would hesitate.

What need the one who walks outside care for the paltry bars
That keep him from the ones who feast? They keep them from the stars!
His virtue is not livered, nor his strength in gold and lace;
He knows there be no crowns save at the ending of the race.

He draws his rugged manhood from some distant Avatar
Who stood breasthigh to Deity ere Abram saw the star
And followed from the plains of Ur toward the western sea,
Leaving behind the splendor and the glory of Chaldea,

And while the Teuton guards his herds; patrols his bursting barns;
The Celt is on the mountain side, day-dreaming, by his cairns;
He has erased all passing things from his philosophy,
And in their place, with fire tipped pen, has wrote: "Eternity!"

When Saxon boundaries narrow and they mourn a kingdom lost,
The Celt, if truth and worth abide, can count no other cost;
With simple, child-like wonderment, half allied to surprise,
He views the Latin's dolor at the hardness of the skies.

The shrinking of the tawny ones, the grovelling of the dark,
The wolf fang and the jackal cry of all the breed who hark
Back to the Goth and Vandal for concept of great and least,
To him are stranger than the dream behind the wanton's feast.

What matter if the idle mock, to entertain the crowd?
Is it not written in the book that other sheaves have bowed?

What matter if a crumbling crown and purple be withheld?
Can there be guaranty of peace when angels have rebelled?

The body cannot mould the soul, no more than gibe and slur
Or commendation of the world, can fashion character;
And whatsoever any book of deep conjecture shows,
There's somewhere in Eternity a reigning God who knows.

Irish Counties

Dublin an' Kings, wid th' Sassenach bane iv thim;
Waterford, Wexford; Wicklow, in th' thrain iv thim;
Limerick an' Clare, th' whole worruld hov had gain iv thim,
Monaghan, Armagh, Kilkenny, Tyrone;
Meath, Tipperay; there's music an' soul to thim;
Carlow, Queens, Leitrim, Antrim; there's a roll to thim;
Kerry, Kildare an' Cavan, there's a troll to thim;
Sure, an' th' piper could play thim, och hone,

Down Donegal, Fermanagh, th' green iv thim;
Roscommon, Sligo, an' Derry, th' queen iv thim;
Westmeath an' Mayo—jist whiff th' potheen iv thim;
Truth, in thimsilves they're perfection iv tone;
Longford an' Louth, there's a sweep an' a swing to thim;
Galway an' Cork, there's a challenge an' ring to thim;
Speedin' th' day whin their sons will be king to thim;
Sure, an' it's comin', me darlint, och hone.

I'm Afraid When the Dark Comes Down

The sun has shut the purple door
Of his chamber in the west;
Like homing doves my thoughts fly on
To the one I love the best.
The earth has doffed her regal robes
And donned her somber gown—
Put your arms around me; cuddle me close;
I'm afraid when the dark comes down.—Chorus:

Put your arms around me; cuddle me close;
You're the one I love the best;
My world is the circle of your arms,
When the light fades from the west,
All fears and worries creep away
And I reck not of renown,
When your arms are 'round and I'm cuddled close
And the dark comes trooping down.

I listen to the cricket's song
And all the sounds of day
Seems like some half forgotten strain
Sung faintly, far away.
The country lanes are ghostly dim
And the shadows lurk in town—
Put your arms around me; cuddle me close;
I'm afraid when the dark comes down.—Chorus:

The fireflies dance, by the woodland path,
And the leaves are strangely still;
The glow-worm lights his evening lamp,
By the old log on the hill;

The stars come shyly, one by one,
As jewels in night's crown—
Put your arms around me; cuddle me close;
I'm afraid when the dark comes down.—Chorus:

The screech owl's voice comes ripplingly,
Like a winter brook in pain,
And the whip-poor-will calls from the hill
Where echoes soft entrain;
The red bird's scarlet coat now seems
Like to the thrush's brown—
Put your arms around me; cuddle me close;
I'm afraid when the dark comes down.—Chorus:

Memories

To the world I may be nameless;
  Being indexed with the poor;
For my lack, perhaps, not blameless,
  Yet, I hold a pirate's lure
Of blest memories of a valley,
  That I knew before my leap
To the waist of the Plymouth's galley;
  There to pull a middle sweep.

There the Shenandoah is sweeping;
  Down its moonlight flooded way;
There the brightest stars are keeping
  Vigils, as on yesterday—
Not one memory would I barter,
  Not one whisper of the pines,
For the order of the Garter,
  Or the spoils of all earth's mines.

There the grass has hid war's marring;
  Nature's cloak of charity,
Has crept o'er the cannon's scarring,
  Hiding, so no eye may see
Unsought wounds, and seeing harken,
  From the now unto the then—
God be praised! though skies may darken,
  Once I walked and talked with men.

Walked with men whose honor won me;
  Stalwarts of the chivalrous line;
Walked with morning dew upon me
  And the zest of living mine.
Then the circle of existence
  Widened outward, from the past,
And the form of life's persistence
  In the mould of dreams was cast.

Then the spirit, effervescent,
  Leaped, upcurling to'ard the stars,
And the evening's silver crescent,
  Like some ancient Avatar's
Promise of unblighted Aidenn's,
  Just adove the tree tops showed,
And Diana and her maidens
  Gamboled down the dusky road.

It is not my pulse is slacking,
  That I hate these ankle chains;
It is not that warmth is lacking
  In the ichor of my veins;
It is not my eyes are dimmer—
  Life is ever inner sight—
It is that the moonbeams shimmer
  And the nymphs dance there, tonight.

Maggie O'Brien

Away wid yez, Maggie O'Brien,
O' honel an its sorry th' day,
Thot Oi met yez, all smilin' an' sighin';
For me heart ye hov stolen away.

Ah, aure, Oi reminder th' mornin'
Yez coom, trippin' loight thro' th' dew;
There moight hov bin augur's an' warnin'
But me eyes—they could only see you.

Oi gave me heart into yez kapein'
An' yez tuk ut wid laughter an' mirth,
An' Oi wondered, behad, wur Oi slapein'
Or walkin' clane off iv th' earth.

Wid yez be me soid 'twor high honor,
To sit on th' stoyle thot's bechune
Th' farrum iv yez cousin, O'Connor,
An' thot iv me cousin Muldoon.

An' joost as th' noight burds coom flyin'
Oi'd take yez small hand in me fist;
To take ut away ye'd kape tryin'
But all ye wud say wud be: "Whist!,"

Oi'm thinkin' ye'll allus remimber
Th' noight iv O'Lafferty's ball;
An' wan ither noight in Siptimber
Whin we met in th' lane be th' Hall.

But away wid yez Maggie O'Brien,
Ut's th' robber ye are, me colleen;
Bad luck to yez smilin' an' sighin'
An' to me for a witless spalpeen.

A Ballad of the Fair

Oi've been to the fair, an' och hone, glory be,
Th' dochter do say, Oi'm a soight for to see;
Me blackthorn is bruk, an' me hid's in a sling,
An' Oi'm nursin' a thurst thot is fit for a king.

Oi wor drinkin' potheen, whin some wan says to me:
"Be th' robes iv the Saints, Moike, they're lookin' for ye."
Says Oi: "Who is lookin'?" says Dinnis O'Flynn,
"Thot traitorous crew iv th' house iv McGinn."

Said Oi: "Let th' dirty tax githerers come on;
'Tis little Oi care for th' divvil's own spawn:"
Then grabbin' me blackthorn an' lacin' me vist,
Oi truns back me shoulders, an' truns out me chist.

Thin, githerin' me cousins, the Burkes an' O'Flynns,
We hunted up thot Divvil's brood, th' McGinns;
An' th' foight thot we had! Mavourneen, glory be!
Afther havin' had thot, whut can matther to me!

In th' thick iv th' fray, wid me stick in me hand,
Oi met a McGinn, an' Oi says to him: "Stand
An' take whut Oi give yez, me dear cosset lamb,
An' Oi'll polish yez hid, loike th' arthist Oi am.',

It wor Terrince O'Leary, th' piper, who said:
"Oi'm ninety years ould, an' full manny a hid
Bruk to th' quane's taste hov Oi seen in me day,
But nivver wan in sich a masterly way."

Th' Father's been here, an' says he, wid a frown:
"Moike, ye hov disgraced th' Church an' th' town;
Ye've abused th' potheen, loike a poor, witless fool,
But ye'll now pay th' piper—O, won't ye, me jewel?"

Th' Father says: "Shame," an' perhaps he is roight;
But whut does he know iv th' jies iv a foight?
He's a dear mon iv peace, an has been all his loife,
Wid no call to thrim down aither neighbor or woife.

Says he: "Ye'll do penance for all iv yez sins,
An' th' spleen ye'v been nursin' again th' McGinns;"
Sure Oi'll do th' penance, but let thim hov a care,
Or Oi'll break all their hids at th' very next fair.'

My Own People

I celebrate men of my blood; men of my flesh and bone;
Men who have fashioned kingdoms, with no kingdom of their own;
A race that seek the firing line where'er a flag's unfurled,
The pioneers of tenderness, the guardians of the world.

Since days before a record was they've fought to make men free
And conquered on the mountain slopes and by the sounding sea;
Some sleep where alien hands have carved their names in lasting stone;
But more rest in the desert waste where God keeps watch alone.

In that which makes for character and for eternal things
They have been rich, but more than poor in that which nurtures kings;
The things which men have never coined nor passed by gage or deed,
They've made as universal and as boundless as their creed.

When all things tangible shall pass and down some fiery way
The world, that others worship so, speeds onward to decay,
The race that bore the burden here will come unto its own,
Will see the light beyond and read the name within the stone,

You cannot nnderstand the song? 'twere marvelous if you could;
Knowledge is of external things but wisdom comes by blood;
And none there be, save of my race, with mystic lore endowed,
Who know the omen of the mist, the augur of the cloud.

Therefore I celebrate grand men; men of my blood and bone;
Men who have fashioned kingdoms with no kingdom of their own;
Men who have borne the battle's brunt and testified by scars;
Men of the Commonwealth of God, whose frontier is the stars.

Lonesome

Lonesome, O, I'm lonesome:
I shall never be otherwise;
So long as my eyes shall follow
The course that the arrow flies.

Lonesome, O, I'm lonesome;
So little the hours contain!
The nights are sisters of sadness;
The days are the brides of pain.

Lonesome, O, I'm lonesome;
The larger the throng: I own
To an augumented sorrow,
Which lessens when I'm alone.

Lonesome, O, I'm lonesome;
Where the jackals, for greed of pelf,
Once roused me to fight for another,
I cannot rouse for myself.

Lonesome, O, I'm lonesome,
And I cannot understand
Why the pilot house is empty;
With the bark in sight of land.

Lonesome, O, I'm lonesome;
For you my fair colleen;
My absent one, it is marah--
O, I'm lonesome mavourneen.

A Prayer

O, God! for some name adequate;
Some sound, by which to rightly brand
The members of the sodden band,
Who curse the church and curse the state.
White hot, from some fierce furance fire

Where speech is molten, let me draw
The chief sound of all damning law;
To lash the ones whose sole desire
Is to acquire, and still acquire.

Give me, of words, more potent ones
Than ever yet vouchsafed have been
Unto Thine angels, or to men,
In all the process af the suns;
That I may mark the Mammon breed
So men of flesh may understand
The vileness of their leperous hand;
And understanding may be freed
From the miasma of their greed.

I realize the poverty
Of all tongues present, and of the past,
And know there never yet was cast
In Time, nor in Eternity
Before Time was, words that would bear
The idea; be comensurate
To picture on the brain the state
Of they who pray the groveler's prayer
And by their slimy purse strings swear.

For this I know; had such words been
They would, despite the law of death
Of language, seize their former breath
And tremble on the tongues of men;
And, trembling, gather potent fire
To burn the swart, squat sons of Greed
And purge the world of the foul breed
Whose sole ambition and desire
Is to acquire, and still acquire.

To H. R. M. Smith

(On his departure for Ireland.)

You are going back to Erin;
Take my greetings to the sod—
To the land of my forefathers,
The fierce furance where our God
Fines the gold that passes current
Wheresoe'er a flag's unfurled—
Whence He draws His steel and iron
For the fashioning of the world.

You are going back to Erin
Where the men and women hold
Heartbeats and the heart's traditions
Of more value than mere gold;
To the cradle of earth's warriors
Who have suffered, without moan,
While they hewed and fashioned kingdoms,
With no kingdom of their own.

You are going back to Erin;
Tell them that in this far land
They have blood and spirit brethren,
Men who feel and understand.
Men in whose veins, free and bounding,
Leaps the red blood of the Celt:
Men who hold to old traditions,
Though the earth and heavens melt.

You are going back to Erin;
If again you set your face
Westward, bring a bit of shamrock
From the cradle of my race;

From the fair land where God fashions—
To be in life's maelstrom hurled—
All His pioneers of progress,
All his guardians of the world.

Mistuh Moon, Youh Ain' no Friend ob Mine

Mistuh Moon, look heah! Ise telling youh true
Dis coon hab done got it in foah youh;
Hit seems to me youh takes delight
In foolin wif me mos' ebery night.
Las' night I crept to a hen house doah,
An' de dawg wah ersleep, I could heah him snoah,
An' den youh had to go an' shine—
Mistuh Moon, youh ain' no friend ob mine. Chorus:

Mistuh Moon, youh ain' no friend ob mine
An' youh kaint patch it up wif me.
Youh's de cause ob all de trouble Ise had
An' youh jess woan let me be.
I wish I was tall as de sky
An' had a breff so stout,
Dat I could stan' right heah dis night
An' blow youh light plumb out!

De odder night, on a park settee,
I wah holdin a yaller gal on mah knee,
When mah wife come by, but it wah too dark
Foah her to see us an' spoil our spark—
Youh couldn' a stayed behin' dat cloud;
Youh jess had to shine, an' shine out loud—
Oh, yes, youh jess done had to shine—
Mistuh Moon, youh ain' no friend ob mine.—Chorus:

Dere's thin rine millyuns, down on de creek,
An' deys been dead ripe foah mor'n a week;
But dere's a man wif a gun sittin on de fence
An' he's watchin' 'em—it ain' no pretense!
I could get some ob 'em if youh'd stay hid,
But den, youh'd do whut youh allus did;
Youh'd jess hop out an' shine, an' shine—
Mistuh Moon, youh ain' no friend ob mine!—Chorus:

Georgia Love Song

Choppin in de cotton an a-whistlin ob er chune,
Way down in Georgia;
Pickin ob de banjo in de light ob de moon,
Way down in Georgia;
Sittin on er log wif mah Nanny Loo,
Way down in Georgia;
Wishin had er cabin to take huh to,
Way down in Georgia.—Chorus:

De rich can own dey houses and dey lan's,
Cose mah honey;
But dey kaint dis flutter an dis hol'in' han's,
Wif all dey money;
Kaint own dis ebenin nor de stars above,
Nor dis happy;
Dey kaint buy de moonlight an dey kaint buy love—
O, I'll ast youh Pappy!

Heart git to flutterin an it beat mighty quick,
Way down in Georgia;
Words get up in mah throat an stick,
Way down in Georgia;

Take huh han an I pat it some,
Way down in Georgia.
She do de talkin foah Ise plumb dumb,
Way down in Georgia.—Chorus:

She snuggle lil' closer, lak she scairt ob harm,
Way down in Georgia;
Clare to goodness, she jes fit mah arm,
Way down in Georgia—
Doan want no cabin, Ise tellin youh true,
Way down in Georgia;
Whilst Ise got dis log an mah Nanny Loo,
Way down in Georgia.—Chorus:

Forced

Today Oi seen a lady fair,
Dressed in most sumcheous clothes,
Embrace a tarrier in her arrums
An' kiss his snubby nose!

Ut looked loike woeful waste to see
Her kiss thot black an' tan,
But Oi'll not cuss her copiously,
Until Oi've seen her man.

For maybe whin she kisses him
Ut gives her such a jog—
Puts such a woild taste in her mouth,
She has to kiss the dog!

The Drummer Boy

Long and fierce had raged the battle,
Dearly bought was each advance,
By the scarred and battered legions
Of the sunny land of France.
Gloomily the Marshalls watched it—
Watched and saw the centre swerve,
Saw the eagles dip and falter
As they met each fresh reserve.
Sadly the great King of Commons
Gazed upon his Spartan band
As he murmured: "This is surely
More than flesh and blood can stand."
Near him stood a youthful drummer,
Ready, with his drum, to beat
Signals to the wavering colums,
And the Chief said: "Sound retreat!"
But the boy looked on his sovereign,
And he seemed to tower large,
As he said: "I never learned it;
I can only sound the charge!"

"What if there be other foemen
Waiting, couchant, on the marge
Of the river—on the hillside—
Sire! O, let me sound the charge!
I have beat it at Marengo
And the legions cheered me, Sire;
As they forward swept, undaunted,
To their baptism of fire!
I have rolled it when your legions
Met the horse of Murad Bey—

When the fierce sons of the desert
Madly threw their lives away!
I have sounded it in Syria,
Sounded it on holy ground,
While your eagles rushed to victory!"
And the solemn Chief said: "Sound!"
Loud the "Charge!" rolled, bold defiant,
Forward vaulted foot and horse,
Over comrade's bleeding body,
Over foeman's mangled corse!

"See, O, Sire, the Old Guard sweeping,
Like a storm, across the bridge!
Wavering not! O, Sire, 'tis glory!
Look! Our eagles crown the ridge!
Vive la France! 'Tis victory! victory!
See! the foemen break and fly!
Look! O, Sire, no alien standard
Shows against the clearing sky!"
Said the Chief: "My boy, the glory
Of this day belongs to you;
For this you shall ride beside me
When we march in Grand Review!"
But the boy's lips paled, then purpled,
As he reeled and to his side
Pressed his hand and said: "Twere glory!
But I never more shall ride;
Nevermore shall beat reveille;
Nevermore shall sound the "charge!"
Life is sweet—but, O, my Sovereign,
I percieve that death is large!"

"When my comrades, crowned with glory,
Bivouac on the Field of Mars,
I'll be camping out and distant

In the white waste of the stars.
Take my drum and hang it, Sovereign,
Hang it in my country's halls—
Hang it close beside some standard,
Where the light of glory falls.
Seek and find my sweet-faced mother
In her cot beside the Seine,
Tell her that her boy—her drummer—
Is not coming home again!
Tell her Sovereign—is it sunset?
Things so mist-wrapped seem, and gray,
And the shouting of the legions
Flutters dim and far away—
Sire, embrace me!—tell her Sovereign,
That I sounded the advance
And then died, as she would have me,
Died for her, and home, and France!

Sentiment

Just today I read a heresy; surely by the devil sent;
"That the glory of this present is the lack of sentiment."
And my spirit rose within me, like the tide's resistless swell,
And I cried: "Back, back, foul falsehood, back unto your home in hell!"

Hitherto, from the beginning, when with life the world was jeweled,
Sentiment has fashioned manhood; sentiment has reigned and ruled.
It was sentiment drew Abraham from out the land of Ur,
To build a shrine in Bethel and to form his character.

It was sentiment caused Moses to into the desert go;
It was sentiment that broke the iron yoke of Pharaoh;
It was sentiment that led the Hebrew people through the sea;
Sentiment enabled Daniel to defy the kings decree.

It was sentiment that hung the glory over Marathon;
Sentiment has been the vanguard, down each way the race has gone;
It was sentiment that bore the golden eagles of old Rome,
From the cloudy springs of Egypt to the old Earth's ice crowned dome.

Sentiment walled ancient Sparta, with a pulsing, living wall,
And stood beside the Nazarene, in Pilate's judgment hall;
Sentiment caused every martyr to count death as gain, not loss;
It lead Paul before the headsman; it led Peter to the cross.

Sentiment has ever bared its breast unto oppression's storms;
It was sentiment that drew intrepid Luthur down to Worms.
It was sentiment that fought the Duke of Alva, weary years;
It was sentiment that widened all humanity's frontiers.

It was sentiment that strengthened hearts in every holy war;
It was sentiment that perched upon the white crest of Navarre.
It was sentiment drew Wickliffe to the death he nobly died;
It was strong men, moved by sentiment, who stemmed the pagan tide.

It was sentiment that triumphed every time that right has won;
Sentiment that led the farmers up the hill at Lexington;
It was sentiment that led men, smiling, to a patriot's grave;
Sntiment that struck the fetters from the galled limbs of slave.

It is sentiment that keeps mankind from groveling in the mire;
It is sentiment that in their hearts lights every sacred fire.
Sans sentiment all things we know were bitter, dead sea fruit;
Only sentiment divides the child of reason from the brute.

Sympathy

The lot or the caged canary
Has never appealed to me;
He comes by the way of a purchased nest,
From a prisoned ancestry.
He knows no sun-kissed meadows;
No swaying twig of tree;
It were death to open his gilded cage
And cast him out as free.

But O, to the prisoned eagle;
That once in his life has known
The trackless sky above the clouds
And the highest jut of stone;
My heart goes out in pity,
Like a river to the sea,
And I feel the heart oppression
Of his staring tragedy.

The Old Virginia Spirit

The Old Virginia Spirit! the clods have cursed it oft,
And sneered at and derided him who bore its flag aloft;
But there be tall, broad-shouldered souls where'er its
banner flies;
Than whom no grander ever stood beneath the arched
skies.

The Old Virginia Spirit hath power of its own;
It makes a veteran of the boy before his beard be grown;
Through it the basic knowledge to the budding women
come,
That they build nearest heaven when they rear a man
child's home.

The Old Virginia spirit! go down the far frontier
Of that which makes for character, and of each pioneer
Inquire: "What lured you hitherto?" and then return to me
And bring me word of what they say—what each one
answers thee.

The Old Virginia spirit; go back the Nation's ways,
And count you each memorial that stands for glorious
days!
Inquire; "who raised this monument?" and when reply is
made,
Sneer you at Old Virginia—if you be unafraid!

The Old Virginia spirit! God keep it in the land!
And teach us how to wait until the world shall under-
stand!
O, give us patience, for we know somewhere this side the
gates
Of thine Eternity, our God, mankind's awakening waits!

Other Days

Down in front the crowd is cheering,
They are calling for me now;
I must go and stand before them,
I must smile on them and bow;
I must take the flowers they throw me,
As a token of their praise,
But I'll see beyond, beyond them,
Flowers and fields of other days.

Let them shout; the fickle fever
Of my fame is in the air;
But their praise to me is empty
As the ring I dare not wear.
Empty as the golden circlet
Which came to my willing hand,
That which brought me Dead Sea apples,
For he could not understand.

I shall smile, for it is easy,
Disenchanted, to be brave,
And a smile was given woman
Wherewith she might hide a grave.
They will never guess my heartache,
For I'll boldly meet their gaze,
But I'm lonesome, lonesome, lonesome,
For the love of other days.

Let them think my hour of triumph
Is this present and that they
Are the ones who share it with me;
This will please them, they will say

Pleasant things of me tomorrow;
But my hour—my hour supreme,
Was back in life's sun kissed gardens
Ere this present was a dream.

It is over; take these flowers!
God! I would that I could say
This were life—but life? I've known it;
Known it in another day;
When it was the chiefest treasure;
When the world and stars were mine!
Known it when it shook my pulses
With the vigor of new wine.

And this? though days be extended
Into years, and score by score,
Years should pass, if love be absent,
'Tis existence—nothing more!
This, therefore, is but existence—
Just a seeming—like a play—
And love will not brook the footlights—
Leave me! let me kneel and pray!

The West Where the Sun Goes Down

We have grown to love the glorious west,
O, heart of mine, and know
That into its stillness and its rest.
Not to our dole we go.
The dreams we dreamed when the blood was warm;
Our beauteous mirage town,
Shall one take substance; the other form,
In the west, where the sun goes down.

'Twas not always thus; there were times, my dear,
When the way we would lengthen on;
Times when the sunset seemed too near
To the red glow of the dawn.
But now we know the islands, blest;
The isles of the crossless crown,
Are hidden deep in the golden west;
The west, where the sun goes down.

We have passed the rebel gates of youth;
The gates with the battered post,
And dined this side, in solemn sooth,
With Ambition for our host,
But the lights must fade behind each feast—
To fickle is all renown;
But there is no serpent's trail, nor beast,
In the west, where the sun goes down.

Three Prayers

One prayed for knowledge and the world
Came to him, kneeling at his feet
A little space, and yet, his face
Lacked that repose which men call sweet.
His name they blazoned on unfurled,
Breeze kissing banners; he was king;
Crowned in their eye and presence by
The ink horn's crown of wondering.

One prayed for wisdom and all doubt
Fled from him, and an angel came
And took all dole from out his soul,
Then whispered to him a new name.

And yet, with all fear barred from out
Life's citadel, he knew the stress
Which struggles on, from dawn to dawn,
With sorrow's sister, emptiness.

But one passed by all crumbling shrines
And lifting eyes to heaven above,
Cried: "Father, just give to my trust
The priceless jewel of thy love."
And lo! from where God's glory shines,
A troop of power clad angels came
His words to garb and point and barb
And wing them with compelling flame.

Give Me to Understand

There may be lands beyond my sight
And sounds beyond my ears;
There may be day beyond this night
And life beyond my years.
Perhaps, somewhere, is heard to heed,
The voice of those who pray,
But faith is weak and frail indeed,
Since baby went away.

When down the mystic ways of dream
The young go, one by one,
While time and age scarred halt, 'twould seem
Some despite has been done.
I know why I must wave my hand—
Why I must quit the play,
But I can never understand
Why baby went away.

Perhaps when first the morning mists
Were mustered in the sky;
His dead, some father stooped and kissed
And wondered, as do I;
And in that far, dim, morning land,
Just as I do today,
Cried: "Give me, now, to understand,
Why baby went away."

They tell me supplicate, but then,
Before mere words had birth,
The minds and throbbing hearts of men
Were ageing with the earth—
I have no words at my command
Wherewith to kneel and pray,
Save these: "Give me to understand,
Why baby went away."

Be Nice to Me, I'm Tired

"Be nice to me, I'm tired," said a weary little boy,
As he climbed upon a loving mother's knee;
And as he laid his head upon her breast and closed his eyes,
He whispered: "I am tired, be nice to me."—Chorus:

Be nice to me, I'm tired; come kiss my eyelids down;
Bright angels, waft to heaven this my plea;
I'm weary of the countryside and weary of the town;
I'm tired angels, O, be nice to me.

"Be nice to me, I'm tired," said a lover, as he scanned
His sweetheart's face, for signs which lovers see;
She knew the past but thrust it behind her when he said;
I'm tired, sweetheart. O, be nice to me."—Chorus:

"Be nice to me, I'm tired," a strong man said to Fate,
For he had battled long and manfully,
Against strong tides and headwinds, now he could only say;
"I'm tired, while I rest be nice to me."—Chorus:

"Be nice to me, I'm tired," said an old man as he peered
Into the shadows of eternity;
"I have not run the race, perhaps, as nobly as I should;
But, Father, I am tired, be nice to me."—Chorus:

Goodby

Goodby; the word is as sweetly sad,
As when, in Eden, long years ago,
'Twas uttered; for hearts are still the same
And the self-same passions surge to and fro.
We meet and pass on a shoreless sea,
With currents running here and there;
We see strange sights in its troubled depths
And hear strange sounds in the circling air.

Goodby; a clasp of the hand and then
A longing for rest for weary feet—
Goodby; the marah I shall forget,
And retain no memories, save the sweet.

I have no place in my heart of hearts,
For the poisoned arrow, nor scorpion sting;
I guard my treasure chamber close,
Lest these should jostle some worthy thing.

Goodby; there are many of you I love,
For you are spirit-born kin of mine,
And around the moments when soul met soul,
Will memories tendrils ever twine.
I've no regrets that I spoke your barks—
Regrets are vapid things at best—
Goodby—Goodby—we meet again
Beyond the stillness of the west.

Wanderlust

Who will may wait a sire's entail;
For the peace of the roof tree pray;
But I thank my God for the lust of the trail,
That calls me away, away.

I have no heart for the conquered land,
Chained fast to the chariot wheel
Of forces no man may understand—
He may only dimly feel.

The camp-fire brightening the sodden lea,
Where a former fire has glowed,
Holds none of the welcome warmth for me,
That I find on the fireless road.

Let those who will walk a hedged way,
I yearn to the wider range;
Let me follow the trail, to the end of my day,
And heaven will not seem strange,

The Yukon

In the frost shot core of the frozen north;
The north where the floes are fed;
The north where wild blasts are wed;
    It has its rise
    Neath the cold, gray eyes
    Of the Artic skies
    And its lullabies
Are the groans of the glacier's bed—
The glacier that grinds the north.

It still laps barren shores, although
Since time from Eternity
Was carved, it has sought the sea—
    What might it have done
    Had the wealth of sun
    Of the Amazon
    O'er the wild Yukon
Been showered, from infancy;
Instead of ice and snow.

A Fragment

O the bleak and bitter years,
With their cares, and fears, and tears;
O the dour and dusty highways, leading down,
From the far; world-roofing hills,
Where the soul lifts, fills and thrills,
To the mart infested pavement of the town.

O the maddened rush to gain
Idle things, entrain with pain;
O the greed which grovels ever near the clod;
For the pride of the stick and stone
Of its own; for which alone
It has bartered the eternal things of God.

O the ineffectual days,
Witless ways and venal praise;
Hoarded in the tangy treasury of the earth;
For the brother of the mole,
Lacking soul, and in his dole,
Dying in the circle of a single birth.

Trinity

There is calm, deep calm, some place on earth,
Like that which brooded o'er
The voiceless void, ere the stars had birth,
In the unmarked stretch, before
The World touched luminous mist and hurled
In fore-appointed ways,
Within unbounded space, a world
To measures nights and days.

There is rest someplace, like the ancient rest;
There is somewhere quietude;
Between the lines of the East and West,
In the Hall of Solitude;
Sweet rest, like he who bore the light
Knew, ere ambition's lure
Drew him from off his dazzling height
To suffer and endure.

There is peace on the restless earth somewhere,
With healing in its train,
That waits on the tired heart's wordless prayer
And follows after pain;
Sweet peace, that lifts the heart and thrills,
With mildness girt around,
Like that which was before the hills
Flung back the valleys sound.

Feudists

There is war—there will never be aught else,
Between the mammon sneer
Of the cold, snow nurtured, Puritan
And the thought of the Cavalier.

"Fill thou my purse, lest I curse thee, Lord!"
Is the cry of the Puritan;
But the Cavalier only asks his God
To give him the soul of a man.

Let them sneer at the stain the shackles left;
We would not trade that which
We would were not, for the bigot's cowl
And the gallows of the witch,

They cannot forget the money they spent;
Nor we the ones they killed—
They could not forget the one, if they would;
Nor the other we, if we willed.

The days of chivalry are not dead;
In the hearts of chivalrous men
They still live on the Lord will find
Them here, when he comes again.